

CASCADING (COMMUNICATION AND INTEGRATION) OF VALUE STATEMENTS OF
STARTUPS IN INDIA AND ITS IMPACT ON BUILDING A CULTURE FOR ITS
EMPLOYEES

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my teachers, family, and friends, whose constant support has guided me through every aspect of my life and who have stood by me through both my achievements and adversities.

In particular, I dedicate this work to my late father, **Late Shri. K. Venkata Rao**, whose values and principles continue to inspire me.

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I dedicate this work to the most important people in my life who have shaped me, guided me, and supported me throughout my journey.

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ABSTRACT

CASCADING (COMMUNICATION AND INTEGRATION) OF VALUE STATEMENTS OF START-UP'S IN INDIA AND ITS IMPACT ON BUILDING A CULTURE FOR ITS EMPLOYEES.

Most start-ups work in high-pressure, fast-paced settings, with the nature of value communication influencing all aspects of employee motivation of employees to decision-making, performance, and identity of the organization. The impacts of cascading of values include helping in shaping culture, enhancing alignment, and promoting long-term growth. The results of the study showed that employees rate the communication, clarity, integration, and monitoring of the company value statements as generally weak to moderate. Storytelling is one of the core tactics to execute abstract principles into common lived experiences on boarding, town halls, and recognition programs. The effective challenges faced by organizations while cascading values are inconsistency, interpretation gaps, and operational pressures. The cascading of value statements can be improved in the Indian scenario by longitudinal analysis and industry specific comparisons.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The startup ecosystem of India is dynamic in nature with a huge number of businesses being introduced in a range of industries (Singh, Chauhan and Dhir, 2020). The startup landscape of India has experienced significant improvements due to a range of factors such as rapid technological advancements, greater internet penetration, an increase in government initiatives like Startup India, and an increased influence of venture capital (Chandiok and BCIPS, 2016). The evolving business environment of India and an enhancing economy of the country is greatly improved through these startups as they amplify innovation, economic development, and job creation. Nonetheless, numerous challenges are faced by these startups as they scale, among which are regulatory barriers, fierce market competition, and retention of a skilled workforce. Among the various challenges faced by Indian startups, one challenge that is often not given much consideration is the efficient integration and communication of core organisational values, which is a crucial factor in forming the culture of the company.

The value statements of a startup represent its core vision, mission, and values that shed light on their goals and purpose, such as fundamental beliefs, and guiding principles that form the workplace dynamics, decision-making, and behaviour of the organisation (Dhochak and Doliya, 2020). In contrast to large and well-established businesses that have well-defined cultures, startups have a continuously evolving nature which makes it crucial for them to reinforce and clearly define their values. To maintain a unified organisational identity, it becomes imperative for startups to enhance the process of cascading these values which incorporates the efficient transmission and communication of the organisational values through the chain from founders to employees. Particularly in India, to determine the behaviour and engagement of employees, value statements hold a significant position in the startup environment due to the inherent societal norms and ideals that value respect, hierarchy, and community orientation. The capability of businesses to effectively imbue these values in the everyday operations of the company can help in thriving even in a highly competitive environment, drive long-term growth and success, and enhance employee loyalty.

Organisational culture is a crucial aspect of startups. As per the organisational culture framework introduced by Edgar Schein (2010), corporate identity, behaviour, decision-making, and other factors are greatly influenced by the well-established values and beliefs of the organisation. A failure to set-up a strong cultural foundation makes startups vulnerable to goals misalignment, high turnover rates of employees, and a lack of trust between employees and leadership (Hussien, 2017). An additional challenge is faced by the startups in India as they grow rapidly which includes the successful maintenance of their founding principles along with expanding their workforce. Inconsistencies arise in the workplace culture when startup teams expand and include new employees who might not find themselves aligned or are not committed with the core values of the companies. Thus, to sustain a motivated and cohesive workforce, it becomes imperative for startups to effectively communicate and reinforce their values (Majka, 2024). Enhancing employee resilience and engagement is crucial for startups and this is made possible through cascading values. Startups often operate in a volatile environment which strains both employees and leaders due to issues such as economic uncertainties, shifting market demands, and financing difficulties. A company that has a well-integrated value system ensures that employees stay motivated even during challenging times by providing them with a sense of purpose (Khangembam, 2022). Furthermore, the integration of core values in the daily operations of startup companies also fosters accountability, innovation, and collaboration in the workplace. Employees are proactively involved in the success of the company and are more inclined to be committed to its vision if they identify with the values of the company.

The COVID-19 outbreak made it considerably clearer that entrepreneurs needed to reaffirm their core values (Oberoi, Halsall and Snowden, 2021). Economic downturns, operational disturbances, and the sudden transition to remote work put startups' resilience to the test around the world. Startups in India with a strong cultural base fared better throughout the crisis because their staff remained united by a shared objective and set of values (Sreenivasan, Suresh and Tuesta Panduro, 2023). During the pandemic, various organisations executed innovative techniques to reaffirm their core values, including online town halls, mentoring programs, and staff wellness campaigns. These initiatives exhibited how significant value-driven leadership is for managing ambiguity and preserving organisational stability. Startups that put a high emphasis on successfully communicating their core values stand to gain significant traction in a market as cutthroat and dynamic as India, where attracting and retaining talent are critical issues (Sengupta et al. 2023).

Along with supporting corporate culture, a value-driven strategy further enhances brand image and attracts like-minded workers, investors, and customers. A vital part of Indian startups' long-term progress will keep on being their ability to incorporate and maintain core values as they develop and conform to changing market situations. This study investigates the impact of specific internal communication strategies on the alignment of employee behavior with stated organizational values within Indian startups.

The subsequent sections will explore (1) the startup ecosystem in India, (2) the role of values in Indian society, (3) understanding organizational culture, (4) overview of value statements, (5) cascading of value within organizations, and (6) cultural challenges in Indian startups.

1.1.1 The Startup Ecosystem in India

Throughout recent years, India's startup ecosystem has encountered significant growth, making it one of the biggest and most dynamic in the world. With an excess of 100 unicorns (organisations valued at more than \$1 billion) among its more than 100,000 startups, India has turned into a global hub for innovation and entrepreneurship (Holla, 2022). Besides, India's sizable customer base, expanding middle class, and sizable young population have all supported the development of innovative business models that meet a scope of consumer demands. Because of their contributions to job creation, technological developments, and overall economic growth, Indian startups have a significant economic impact (Garg and Gupta, 2021). Technology, medical care, finance, e-commerce, edtech, deep-tech, and other organisations are all included in the startup sector, and each one of them makes a particular economic contribution. Fintech organisations like Paytm, PhonePe, and Razorpay, for instance, have eliminated the requirement for cash transactions in India by transforming digital payments (Varsha and Nalwaya, 2023). Byju's and Unacademy, two edtech giants, have revolutionised the educational landscape by empowering students all over the country to access high-quality education (Wadhwa, 2023). Like this, biotech and healthcare organisations like Practo and CureFit have brought cutting-edge telemedicine, fitness, and preventative healthcare solutions (Kumar and Rai, 2023). Along with boosting domestic GDP (Gross domestic product) these organisations enhance India's reputation in the worldwide startup landscape by attracting global capital and empowering technological collaboration.

The Indian startup environment faces a distinct set of challenges despite its rapid development. Securing finance is one of the most urgent issues, particularly for organisations in their early phases. Because of intense rivalry and investor risk aversion, numerous entrepreneurs find it hard to get early funding, even though venture capital (VC) investment in India has increased significantly (Dingliwal and Sharma, 2023). Even though crowdsourcing, angel investing, and bootstrapping have grown in popularity as alternatives, financial limitations keep on being a significant obstruction to growing operations. Moreover, contrasted with organisations in major cities like Bengaluru, Mumbai, and Delhi, firms in tier-2 and tier-3 cities sometimes have considerably harder time attracting financing (Khanna, 2022). Startups often find it difficult to operate efficiently because of the country's complex legal system, tax regulations, and compliance necessities. For instance, organisations must deal with an intricate web of legal formalities that might obstruct their growth, for example, data privacy rules, foreign currency restrictions, and intellectual property rights (IPR) safeguards. Moreover, regulations relating to foreign direct investment (FDI) in businesses like fintech and e-commerce are frequently changing, requiring that organisations stay adaptable and comply with new rules.

The ability of Indian startups to operate with few resources while retaining a high level of agility is another distinctive feature. Indian entrepreneurs must come up with innovative techniques to expand resources and save costs, rather than Silicon Valley firms, which often have access to an abundance of funding and infrastructure. In Indian entrepreneurship, the concept of "jugaad," or frugal innovative attitude, is strongly implanted (Abubakar et al. 2023). Various firms develop affordable solutions that satisfy budget-conscious customers without sacrificing quality. Organisations that have shown how to grow quickly while maintaining minimal operating expenses include Meesho (social commerce), Zomato (food delivery), and Ola (ride-hailing) (Kathuria, Kedia and Bagchi, 2021). Due to their resource-conscious strategy, Indian entrepreneurs have been able to compete with multinational behemoths. Since Indian organisations compete in one of the world's greatest and most diverse markets, scalability is a top concern. India, which has a population of over 1.4 billion, offers a broad consumer base, however, organisations must deal with a scope of customer tastes, linguistic diversity, and regional economic differences. Hyperlocal strategies have been utilised by many prosperous Indian organisations to target specific demographic groups (Saurav et al. 2023). E-commerce sites like Flipkart and Amazon India, for example, have broadened their business into rural regions by giving reasonably priced shipping

choices and support for vernacular languages. In a similar vein, fintech companies have created tailored financial products for marginalised groups, encouraging financial inclusion via online banking.

One more significant component affecting the startup climate in India is the entrepreneurial spirit of the country (Punj and India, 2021). A new breed of risk-taking and innovative startup founders has been influenced by the success stories of first-generation business owners, like the founders of Infosys, Flipkart, and Zerodha. This innovative culture has been additionally stimulated by the growth of incubators, accelerators, and co-working spaces, which give entrepreneurs access to investors, networking opportunities, and mentorship. Eminent universities like IITs, IIMs, and ISB have additionally been instrumental in developing entrepreneurial potential, as seen by the enormous number of graduates who decide to begin their own businesses as opposed to pursuing conventional corporate jobs (Naveen, 2018). For Indian entrepreneurs, global positioning is turning out to be increasingly crucial, since many are hoping to grow internationally and form crossline partnerships. Major organisations like Sequoia Capital, SoftBank, and Tiger Global are investing into startups in ventures like biotech, artificial intelligence (AI), and SaaS (Software as a Service), which are turning out to be increasingly more notable around the world (Gupta, 2022). Companies like Freshworks, Zoho, and Postman have made a name for themselves internationally, exhibiting that Indian entrepreneurs are fit for contending on a global basis. Besides, new opportunities for Indian entrepreneurs to enter international markets have been created by the government's initiatives to support bilateral trade agreements and ease of doing business. For instance, edtech platforms saw exponential development as online learning became the norm, while Swiggy and Zomato broadened their services past food delivery to incorporate groceries and essentials delivery. These changes showed how rapidly Indian organisations could respond to emergencies and seize new possibilities. With a more prominent focus on green innovation, renewable energy, and social impact initiatives, Indian organisations are likewise setting the norm for sustainable innovation. Clean mobility solutions and carbon emission reduction are the objectives of electric vehicle (EV) startups like Ather Energy and Ola Electric (Kapoor et al. 2024). Along these lines, AI-driven solutions are being utilised by agritech companies, for example, DeHaat and Ninjacart to enhance supply chain efficiency and agricultural output (Gupta, 2023). Indian startups are aggressively promoting social

and environmental change while accelerating corporate growth as sustainability gains international attention.

One cannot overlook the impact of technology on Indian entrepreneurs. Blockchain, cloud computing, artificial intelligence (AI), and big data analytics are transforming corporate processes and enabling entrepreneurs to further enhance decision-making, customer experience, and productivity (Samal et al. 2024). Blockchain-based supply chain management systems, AI-driven banking solutions, and automated customer support bots are just a few instances of how Indian entrepreneurs are using technology to stay on top of trends. Since the government is increasingly supporting digital infrastructure through programs like IndiaStack and UPI, businesses are in a good position to incorporate cutting-edge technology into their business plans (Manjunath, PARAMASHIVAIAH and Nellore, 2024). With sustained investment, regulatory support, and a growing talent pool, the Indian startup environment seems to have a bright future. Startups must, notwithstanding, keep on being adaptable and innovative even in the face of obstructions like regulatory complexity, finance sluggishness, and economic uncertainty. In the forthcoming years, which organisations become forerunners in their particular industries will rely upon their ability to develop strong organisational cultures, retain top personnel, and grow effectively. The Indian startup ecosystem is poised to have a significant impact on the development of the global business environment due to its distinctive combination of resilience, flexibility, and entrepreneurial spirit.

1.1.2 The Role of Values in Indian Society

Indian society has always been moulded by values, which significantly affect both individuals and organisations. Indian values, which have their underlying foundations in centuries old traditions, place a strong emphasis on moral integrity, empathy, respect, and teamwork (Vij, 2021). These cultural values maintain a balance between custom and modernity by guiding interpersonal connections, family dynamics, and professional contacts. These beliefs and modern work environments have come together to develop distinctive organisational structures and leadership philosophies that set Indian companies apart from their Western counterparts, particularly in India's flourishing startup culture. Respect, which might take various forms, from professional hierarchies to familial connections, is one of the most distinctive trademarks in Indian culture (Randhavane, 2023). Respect for elderly folks is a fundamental value in Indian homes, impacting how decisions are made and the way in which younger individuals connect with their

elders. This tradition additionally applies to the workplace, where leadership systems often display hierarchy. Workers use honorifics while addressing senior coworkers, and respect to authority is much of the time a part of decision-making procedures (De Gersem, 2020). Because of top-down decision-making, this hierarchical style could infrequently hinder innovation, however, it likewise advances a culture of discipline and organised leadership. Regardless, many organisations have integrated a more egalitarian approach while maintaining respect for experience and knowledge as they place a higher priority on speed and adaptability.

Indian culture likewise puts a strong emphasis on empathy and solidarity; the concept that "the world is one family," or Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, encapsulates the country's inclination for community and unity (Dash and Sharma, 2024). This principle permeates into corporate circumstances, where team-oriented work cultures flourish. Indian companies place a greater emphasis on interpersonal interactions and collaboration, as opposed to highly individualistic countries where individual ambition much of the time outweighs team goals. Employees and founders at startups frequently create close-knit work cultures where they help each other beyond their professional obligations. Since success is often a shared journey instead of an individual endeavour, this feeling of community leads to better professional networks, fewer attrition rates, and more employee engagement. Indian culture has a strong collaborative spirit that has developed throughout centuries of interdependence, joint family structures, and community-led decision-making (Agrawal and Tyagi, 2010). Partnerships, networking, and mentoring are important to Indian professionals, even in highly competitive commercial settings. Co-working spaces, incubation centres, and mentorship programs are common in India's startup environment, and this is seen in the way firms operate there. Entrepreneurs typically turn to seasoned business people for advice, and corporations frequently work together, whether through cross-industry collaborations or strategic alliances. In a company setting like this, mutual growth and information exchange are valued more highly than ruthless rivalry.

Numerous organisations are propelled to partake in corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs by thoughts like Seva (selfless service), which improves both profitability and societal well-being (Satsangi, 2024). Various Indian entrepreneurs and organisations invest in social impact projects that tackle issues including environmental sustainability, healthcare, and education. Regardless of occasional obstacles from bureaucracy and regulations, ethical business

practices are still highly valued by Indian employees and customers. Indian values additionally impact leadership practices, where trust and interpersonal connections are significant in management. Indian organisations work on relationship-driven authority, rather than Western management approaches that often put an emphasis on formal contracts and stringent performance reviews (Gupta and Bhaskar, 2016). Personal rapport, loyalty, and trust all assume a crucial role in organisational culture, promotions, and recruiting decisions.

Professional integrity and workplace ethics are other examples of how values impact behaviour. Indian startups are turning out to be more aware of the ethical implications of their innovations, especially those in the technology, healthcare, and financial sectors (Malpani and Ghosh, 2023). Ethical concerns are fundamental to protecting public credibility and confidence, whether this is by empowering data privacy, ensuring fair labour standards, or safeguarding transparency in financial transactions. Organisations that maintain integrity and corporate ethics stand out as industry leaders, despite the difficulties posed by corruption and bureaucratic inefficiency. Additional values that have impacted India's changing business environment incorporate resilience and flexibility (Sreenivasan, Suresh and Tuesta Panduro, 2023). Indian organisations, which depend on the age-old thought of accepting change while maintaining core values, have shown notable agility at tackling crises. By changing the strategies of the company, using technology, and venturing into new industries, Indian organisations have shown resilience against global competition, economic slumps, and the COVID-19 pandemic (Sreenivasan, Suresh and Tuesta Panduro, 2023).

One more significant part of Indian culture is the prominence of family values in the working environment. Indian work environments usually reflect family connections, rather than Western societies where work and individual life are generally clearly divided. Decision-making is affected by trust, inheritance, and generational expertise in numerous family-run firms, especially in traditional industries (Lampel, Bhalla and Ramachandran, 2017). The founders' treatment of their staff individuals as members of their extended family is a clear sign of the significance of familial values, even in contemporary organisations. This develops a culture of loyalty where employees have a strong sense of belonging and responsibility. This promotes an inviting and inclusive working environment, even when it occasionally results in nepotism or resistance to outside talent (Lampel, Bhalla and Ramachandran, 2017).

Organisations that value diversity and cultural mindfulness encourage work cultures where employees from a range of backgrounds thrive (Mathur, 2024). This diversity empowers innovation since different perspectives bring about unique solutions for different problems. Indian organisations, particularly those with global objectives, see the value of embracing cultural diversity to reach a broader audience. To oblige various religious traditions, regional preferences, and language demands, many have implemented inclusive recruiting processes and employment cultures. Incorporating values into contemporary organisations include team dynamics and ethical leadership, as well as customer relations. Indian organisations put a higher emphasis on customer-driven strategies and put more importance on long-term trust over transactional interactions (Biswas and Dey, 2024). By offering emotional connection, customising services, and sticking to the conventional standards of hospitality and service, a few prosperous organisations and brands have developed a devoted following. Organisations that adjust their marketing strategies to Indian cultural sentiments regularly find more customer resonance and a competitive advantage in the domestic market.

1.1.3 Understanding Organisational Culture

The common values, convictions, customs, and behaviours that portray how individuals interact inside an organisation are referred to as its organisational culture (Serpa, 2016). The core ethos drives employee behaviours, decision-making, and overall performance. Coherence in motivation, operations, and teamwork are all guaranteed by a strong organisational culture that advances alignment between workers and business goals. Leadership, the work environment, policies, and implicit rules that oversee professional relationships all impact this culture (Serpa, 2016). It eventually decides how an organisation functions both inside and internationally, affecting everything from communication methods to dispute resolution. Organisational culture altogether affects how employees act. Employees acclimate to cultural norms and expectations, which influence their professional behaviour, efficiency, and level of involvement. Workers that work in an innovative work environment are more ready to take risks, contribute ideas, and try out novel strategies (AlEssa and Durugbo, 2022). Startups, in comparison to well-established companies, work in a dynamic, fast-paced environment where adaptability, innovation, and agility are fundamental. The culture of a business influences its ability to attract top talent, retain staff, and grow successfully (Serpa, 2016). Startups often miss the mark on stability and structure of

bigger organisations, therefore culture serves as the organisation's unifying factor. It outlines how staff members work together, how managers motivate groups, and how difficulties are handled in uncertain corporate environments. A startup's culture is dynamic and constantly changing all through its beginning phases (Crnogaj and Rus, 2023). By integrating their own beliefs, work ethics, and vision into everyday tasks, founders assume a crucial role in establishing early culture norms. Since their operating strategies, behaviours, and social interactions lay out the norm for subsequent recruiting, the early team members likewise make a significant contribution.

Another crucial region where organisational culture is significant is in crisis management. Financial impediments, market volatility, operational failures, and competitive pressures are some of the common issues confronted by startups. By empowering adaptability, candid communication, and a problem-solving mindset, a strong culture helps teams in navigating these crises. Agile and flexible cultures empower startups to promptly take an alternate route, explore different strategies, and effectively manage risks (Krivokapic and Mathiassen, 2023). A strong cultural basis ensures that employees stay inspired and dedicated to long-term success as opposed to giving in to temporary setbacks during recessions or financial limitations. Organisational culture directly affects leadership styles in startups. Executives and founders set the tone for the working environment, influencing how staff individuals see responsibility, authority, and teamwork. Transparent startups urge its CEOs to collaborate openly with staff members, requesting their viewpoints and taking proactive measures to solve issues (Hernandez Esparza, 2023). In contrast to this, organisations with an authoritarian or inflexible culture can impede open communication, which could bring about disengagement and internal conflict. Cultural norms are formed by leadership behaviours like inclusion, mentoring, and recognition, which influence employee morale and efficiency in the organisation.

Culture additionally determines workplace dynamics, such as team relationships, communication techniques, and dispute resolution. Startups that focus on an environment of transparency and trust make positive working relationships where staff individuals can communicate issues, share thoughts, and work together without agonising over being judged (Men, Chen and Ji, 2021). This is especially significant in startup settings when quick iterations and experimentation are required. Organisations that advance psychological safety foster an environment where errors are viewed as learning opportunities as opposed to setbacks, which

results in a workforce that is more creative and willing to take risks. One cannot underestimate the significance of cultural fit in retaining and recruiting employees. Startups much of the time give cultural fit first priority while hiring applicants, ensuring that newcomers share the organisation's values and work ethic. Employees who fit in with the organisation's culture effectively become part of teams, make valuable contributions, and are more satisfied with their roles (Khangembam, 2022). Cultural mismatches, on the other hand, might result in disputes at work, lower output, and higher turnover rates. In order to recruit people who align with their organisational culture, many prosperous companies make an early investment in establishing and publicising their cultural policies.

1.1.4 Value Statements: A Key Element of Culture

As the core values that characterise an organisation's purpose, expected ways of behaving, and decision-making systems, value statements help to define its identity. Workers, customers, and various other stakeholders can more likely understand an organisation's ethical underpinnings and cultural objectives by reading these statements, which express its values (Berbegal-Mirabent, Mas-Machuca and Guix, 2021). Value statements highlight the core principles that guide an organisation's day-to-day tasks, rather than mission and vision statements, which put forward strategic aims and long-term objectives. They act as a business' ethical compass, ensuring consistency in corporate behaviour and empowering harmony across all organisational levels. Value statements are significant on the grounds that they assist employees with relating to the goals of the organisation. Employees are bound to decide and act in ways that are consistent with the organisation's core values when they are aware of and support them. Value statements reinforce an organisation's sense of purpose by laying out a unified language. Clearly stated principles offer a framework that helps staff members manage ambiguities while keeping a uniform direction in startups, where fast development and changing problems are typical. Value statements play a critical role in establishing the work environment as startups frequently depend on a strong culture to foster engagement and motivation.

The impact that value statements have on leadership and decision-making is among its most important features. An organisation's culture is moulded by its leaders, whose decisions should be consistent with the pronounced principles of the organisation. Leaders develop a culture of responsibility and moral conduct when they live up to these values. On the other hand,

employees might become frustrated and skeptical if leadership decisions conflict with their values. For example, there is a mismatch that can harm employee morale and brand reputation if a business says it values openness yet withholds important information from staff or clients. Value statements are particularly important for startups that focus on innovation, teamwork, and customer focus. Value statements are a typical tool utilised by prosperous businesses to create their brand, attract talent, and set themselves apart from competitors. One of the top e-commerce businesses in India, Flipkart, for example, has a value statement that underlines innovation, risk-taking, and customer enthusiasm. These values assist the business with rivaling multinational giants like Amazon by directing its approach to risk-taking, problem-solving, and user experience. Flipkart has created a work environment that motivates staff individuals to stretch boundaries and come up with innovative solutions by ingraining these ideals into their culture.

Another example is Zomato, a platform for finding restaurants and ordering food that has made efficiency, agility, and customer pleasure the foundations of its culture. Ownership, creativity, and high standards are emphasised in Zomato's core principles, which have helped the business in maintaining its competitive advantage. At Zomato, employees are encouraged to be self-starting, independent, and supportive of a high-performance culture. The firm has been successful because of the congruence between its value statements and organisational behaviour, which has enabled it to enter new markets and adjust to shifting customer preferences. The importance of value statements in shaping corporate culture is likewise exhibited by Paytm, the top digital payments platform in India. The organisation's core principles stand on trust, creativity, and financial inclusion. These principles have filled in as the establishment for Paytm's introduction to a range of financial services, ensuring the organisation's continued dedication to enabling digital transactions for a broad spectrum of consumers. In a very competitive fintech market, Paytm has established a reputation by upholding a solid ethical foundation.

Value statements affect recruiting and talent retention as well as characterising the organisation's strategy and identity. Businesses with a defined set of values attract employees who share those values, which increases job satisfaction and diminishes attrition. Since workers in startups are oftentimes expected to deal with many tasks and conform to rapid changes, they particularly benefit from recruiting individuals who share their cultural values. Value statements are utilised by companies like CRED, a fintech firm that rewards financial responsibility, to attract

top talent that is enthusiastic about innovation, quality, and transparency. Startups may create teams that are not only exceptionally qualified but also intensely devoted to the company's goal by coordinating recruiting efforts with corporate principles. Value statements are additionally crucial for ethical decision-making and conflict resolution. Value statements act as a guide for ethical considerations in high-pressure circumstances where difficult choices should be made quick. Companies that put a high value on honesty and equity ensure that these qualities are reflected in their decisions, which brings down the chance of both internal and external conflicts. Startups in industries like finance, health tech, or education technology frequently deal with moral conundrums pertaining to corporate responsibility, accessibility, and data protection. These businesses are better able to make ethical decisions that support their long-term goals when they have a solid set of principles.

In addition, by empowering a culture of continuous learning and development, value statements support organisational adaptability. Employees at startups that focus on characteristics like resilience and adaptability are urged to invite change, try out novel ideas, and grow from mistakes. Organisations like Udaan, a B2B e-commerce company, for instance, have included adaptability and customer attention into their core values, which enables them to swiftly change course in response to market needs. Employee engagement and initiative are guaranteed in such a cultural framework, even in unpredictable business circumstances. The authenticity and implementation of value statements are critical to their efficacy. Numerous organisations compose strong value statements but neglect to integrate them into their daily tasks. Values must be actively upheld by business policy, leadership behaviours, and employee motivations to have a strong impact. For example, Google is eminent for its rule of "focusing on the user and everything else will follow." This idea is imbued in its product development process, which prioritises user experience over immediate profit maximisation. Like this, organisations who assert that they care about the well-being of their employees need to put in place concrete rules like possibilities for professional growth, flexible work schedules, and mental health assistance.

Initiatives for employee engagement are another way that entrepreneurs reaffirm their values. Values are frequently included into internal communication plans, team-building exercises, and performance reviews. Organisations might ensure that employees internalise and adhere to these ideas in their day-to-day work by continuously reinforcing them. For instance, Swiggy, a

notable Indian food delivery firm, has established a staff culture that places a high value on productivity, customer satisfaction, and creativity. These principles ensure that the business vision and operational performance are in line, and they are represented in workplace policies, recognition programs, and staff training initiatives. Value statements ultimately form the groundwork of organisational culture, impacting everything from strategic decision-making to staff behaviour. Startups that establish and maintain their principles firmly lay the groundwork for expansion, resiliency, and sustained success. Businesses may create a work atmosphere that is not only productive but also morally and culturally healthy by incorporating these values into their hiring, leadership, and operational procedures.

1.1.5 Cascading of Values: Communication and Integration

To shape the organisational culture and align the core values of the company with the behaviours of its workforce, it becomes crucial to implement the process of cascading values from leadership to employees. Building a cohesive and driven team at startups, where innovation and agility are crucial success factors, relies vigorously upon effective communication and the integration of values. Values do not influence work ethics or decision-making if they are simply abstract concepts that are not properly applied. However, values act as the foundation of employee behaviour when successfully conveyed and maintained, making a strong and mission-driven corporate culture. Establishing the tone is a vital role of leadership in cascading values. Organisational values are for the most part conveyed by founders, leaders, and managers, who show what the firm stands for by their actions. One of the best ways of communicating values is through role modelling, since employees watch and impersonate the actions of their leaders. Employees view business values as authentic and fundamental to workplace culture when leaders constantly maintain them. If a startup focuses on transparency, for instance, its leadership must take part in open communication, publish company updates frequently, and welcome feedback. Any discrepancy between the proclaimed beliefs and the behaviour of the leadership could make employees become doubtful and disengaged.

A critical component of effectively cascading values is communication. The company's values should be conveyed by leaders in a manner that is understandable, engaging, and relevant to employees at all levels. Startups regularly do this through internal newsletters, company-wide meetings, vision statements, and digital platforms that allow staff members to interact with

executives. Values must be incorporated into daily experiences, from performance appraisals to casual conversations, as opposed to being limited to official settings. Making them more accessible might be accomplished by utilising narrative to show how values impact real business decisions. For example, a startup that puts a high emphasis on customer-centricity can feature the accomplishments of staff individuals who exceeded everyone's expectations to enhance the customer experience. Programs for training and development are organised ways of reinforcing values. To ensure that employees understand what the firm stands for right away, organisation values must be covered in onboarding workshops for new hires. Workers might better internalise values by applying them to real-world issues through workshops, interactive conversations, and scenario-based learning. For instance, a financial organisation that values data security would consistently teach staff on ethical data management, stressing how crucial it is to preserving client confidence. Employees are more likely to incorporate business principles into their work habits when they get ongoing training on them.

To additionally underscore their significance, values should be incorporated into performance management systems. Employees are bound to align their behaviours with the organisation's values when they see that doing so is related with incentives, recognitions, and promotions. By assessing workers on how they accomplish their goals as well as their outcomes, many organisations incorporate values into performance reviews. Rather than just assessing individual performance, a company that focuses on collaboration may, for instance, assess a worker's ability to cooperate with other people and cultivate a healthy group dynamic. Rewards like peer-nominated recognitions or "values champion" awards can further motivate staff to live according to key values in their day-to-day work. To ensure that declared beliefs and actual operations are in alignment, organisational rules and procedures should reflect the organisation's values. Startups should have flexible work schedules, mental health assistance, and a fair task allocation if they say they value work-life balance. If an organisation's primary value is innovation, it should support experimentation, accept measured risks, and provide forums for staff members to exchange ideas. Inconsistencies between principles and policies lead to misconceptions and disrupt trust in the leadership. For example, a business that advocates equality should ensure that all employees are treated fairly and that recruiting practices are diverse, demonstrating that the value is more than simply a slogan.

Another fundamental aspect of effectively cascading values is empowering middle managers. Middle managers engage with staff members daily and affect how values are applied inside teams, even when senior management lays out the overarching vision. Compelling value communication, value-driven conflict resolution, and setting an example for their people are all skills that managers should be taught. By incorporating values into day-to-day operations, managers can close the gap between strategic leadership and employees at startups, where hierarchies are frequently flat. For instance, a manager of an organisation that puts a high value on agility must be open to new viewpoints, support iterative problem-solving, and foster an environment that values flexibility. Establishing cooperative forums for value-based discussions urges staff individuals to partake in shaping the culture of the organisation. To discuss how values may be carried out in various contexts, many firms use town halls, brainstorming sessions, and employee engagement tools. Employees feel more responsible and have a sense of ownership when they are urged to share their experiences of maintaining business ideals under challenging conditions. An inclusive startup could frequently investigate ways of making the work environment welcoming and diverse while getting feedback from staff members. Workers are more dedicated to safeguarding those values when they see that they are actively involved in the value integration process.

How much values are imbued in an organisation might be really tested through crisis management and decision-making. In uncertain times, values act as a framework for negotiating challenging conditions. When a startup is facing issues monetarily, for example, it might have to make painful decisions about cost-cutting or layoffs. Leadership should be transparent with staff, offer help when required, and oversee changes fairly if honesty and compassion are fundamental principles. Companies that maintain their core values in times of crisis increase employee loyalty and sustain cultural integrity. When workers see that pressure does not undermine the company's ideals, they are more likely to stay loyal. Employee feedback systems ensure that values are effectively included and remain relevant. Entrepreneurs must lay out avenues for staff to offer their viewpoints on how values are being applied, whether they concur with them, and how to improve cultural components. Workers' genuine alignment with the organisation's values might be understood through anonymous feedback choices, one-on-one discussions, and regular surveys. If pronounced ideals and actual experiences deviate, leadership must intervene to bring practices into compliance with cultural norms. For example, a company that prioritises innovation should

frequently enquire about staff members' feelings of confidence in taking risks and making suggestions for enhancements.

Values should be applied to external connections with stakeholders, investors, and customers notwithstanding internal integration. For example, startups that focus on sustainability ought to ensure that their partnerships and supply chain support environmentally conscious activities. Strong ethical standards should be utilised in marketing, product development, and customer service interactions by businesses that value the confidence of their customers. A startup's market positioning and brand credibility are improved when external stakeholders acknowledge that it truly adheres to its principles. Nowadays, a lot of startups take part in CSR (corporate social responsibility) projects that align with their principles, like supporting community development, sustainability, or education. Eventually, consistent reinforcement, unambiguous communication, and consistent congruence between words and actions are vital for the effective cascade of values. Values become strongly imbued in cultural elements when organisational structures reinforce them through rules, training, and incentives, workers incorporate them into their behaviours, and leadership exemplifies them. Through this strategy, startups are guaranteed to create engaged, moral, and resilient teams that propel long-term success.

1.1.6 Cultural Challenges in Indian Startups

Indian startups face both prospects and challenges as they work in a complex cultural environment where traditional beliefs and contemporary business methods collide. Startups should find some balance between the demands of a dynamic and competitive global business environment and deeply imbued Indian customs as they make progress toward quick expansion. Key challenges faced by Indian entrepreneurs incorporate managing diversity, scaling effectively, and coordinating organisational culture with growth objectives. Long-term viability and commercial relevance depend on effectively overcoming these cultural obstacles. Managing workplace diversity is one of the main cultural issues Indian startups face. India is an exceptionally diverse country, and relationships at work are impacted by different languages, religious perspectives, and socioeconomic origins. Establishing an inclusive work environment where employees from all cultural and geographic origins feel equally appreciated is quite difficult for startups.

One of the most critical difficulties faced by Indian organisations as they expand is scaling while keeping up with organisational culture. Employees in startups' early stages work in close-knit groups that are strongly aligned with the organisation's mission and have a shared sense of purpose. Nonetheless, as the business grows, it turns out to be more difficult to maintain this culture among a growing team. It is possible that new employees will not be as committed to or appreciate the organisation's core values, which could dilute the culture. Moreover, organisations with rapid development might find it hard to effectively blend multiple teams, which can bring about cultural dispersion as various departments make their own subcultures. To ensure that expansion does not compromise organisational identity, leaders must make investments in robust onboarding initiatives and dependable cultural reinforcing techniques. Overcoming the barrier between traditional and modern leadership strategies presents another challenge. First-generation company owners from conventional business families or with exposure to and training in Western business are often the founders behind Indian startups. This results in a range of leadership approaches where some founders favour aggressive growth and experimentation, while others favour a cautious, risk-averse approach. Given both investors and workers often need a clear leadership direction, finding the ideal balance between these approaches is fundamental. While interacting with investors, staff, and clients, executives likewise need to oversee cultural quirks to ensure that traditional business behaviour adheres to contemporary corporate principles.

For Indian startups, gender diversity and workplace equity keep on being significant impediments. Gender bias still exists in numerous sectors, particularly in fields like finance and technology that have historically been controlled by males, in spite of the startup ecosystem's advancement in elevating women into leadership positions. Women are in some cases discouraged from pursuing leadership roles by traditional social conventions, and numerous female professionals experience barriers in the areas of equal pay, workplace safety, and career progression. Startups need to take proactive steps to create fair workplaces by putting in place rules that encourage diversity, offering women mentorship programs, and cultivating an inclusive and respectful culture. Another urgent issue is the trouble of coordinating ethical business practices with conventional negotiating methods. Relationships, discussions, and long-term partnerships have always been highly valued in Indian corporate culture. Startups in fiercely competitive industries, however, might feel under pressure to forfeit ethical values to accomplish quick expansion. Even though they are pervasive in conventional Indian business environments,

practices including informal networking, depending on personal ties, and being flexible in commercial dealings may not align with the openness and compliance standards of contemporary corporate governance. While upholding the relational approach that is ingrained in Indian culture, startups must set clear ethical standards.

1.2 Problem Statement

Indian startups work in a distinct sociocultural setting where traditional values like collectivism, community focus, and respect for authority hugely affect professional interactions. Although these values support stability and employee loyalty, they likewise present serious barriers to effectively incorporating and cascading key organisational values. Because of rapid development, a diversified workforce, and the converging of contemporary business methods with traditional expectations, numerous Indian startups, particularly those in their beginning stages, find it challenging to create a unified organisational culture. Irregularities in decision-making, staff engagement, and overall organisational alignment result from the challenge of converting abstract value declarations into practical behaviours. Research on how Indian startups manage the value transmission process is scarce, regardless of the recognised importance of organisational values in advancing trust, cooperation, and strategic direction. There is a knowledge gap about how Indian startups, which are often resource-constrained and fast-moving, form and maintain their core values on the grounds that most of the research on organisational culture and value transmission focusses on large businesses or Western business environments.

Also, the influence of sociocultural factors on value integration in Indian startups is not adequately covered in the literature currently in publication, which makes it challenging for founders and executives to put effective, context-specific tactics into practice. Since the COVID-19 pandemic made organisations to rapidly switch to remote work, embrace digital communication technologies, and manage employee wellbeing in unpredictable conditions, it made the process of cascading values within startups even more challenging. Traditional methods of integrating values were challenged by the transition to virtual work settings, which constrained leaders to come up with new techniques for preserving a solid cultural basis. While Indian startups face numerous challenges, the effective integration and communication of core organizational values is often overlooked, leading to potential misalignment, decreased employee engagement, and ultimately, hindered growth (DEVI and BHOPAL, 2023). This is particularly critical in India, where societal

norms emphasize respect and community, and a disconnect between stated values and actual practice can severely damage employee trust and loyalty. This study means to give startup founders and leaders helpful insights on developing value-driven organisations in India's dynamic business environment by looking at how Indian companies responded to these difficulties and pinpointing tactics that enhanced organisational resilience.

1.3 Research Objectives

The main goals of this study are:

- To understand the importance of incorporating core values in Indian startups.
- To investigate how these values are communicated and disseminated throughout the organization as it expands.
- To comprehend how organizational culture is influenced by the integration of values and its effects on overall performance and employee conduct.

1.4 Research Questions

This study aims to guide the investigation by exploring these important research questions:

- Why are core values important for the development of Indian startups?
- How are these values effectively shared and included in everyday activities within the organization?
- What effect does incorporating these values have on how employees act and the overall success of the company?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is significant for Indian startups since it looks at how organisational culture, employee engagement, and long-term performance are moulded by the effective cascade of fundamental values. It gives founders and leaders helpful ideas for safeguarding cultural unity in the face of expansion and change by seeing how values are integrated into a rapidly changing startup environment. This study fills in gaps in the research on value integration in Indian startups by giving researchers data about how sociocultural elements impact organisational behaviour. These findings might be utilised by experts, like business advisors and HR professionals, to develop leadership models, training programs, and communication frameworks that maintain

values. In India's aggressive business environment, the research at last helps create startup ecosystems that are resilient, value-driven, and creative.

1.6 Scope and Limitations

With an emphasis on Indian startups, this study research how the incorporation and cascading of core values are influenced by their distinct operational and cultural elements. It explores employee engagement, leadership styles, and value-driven organisational culture in startups at different phases of development. The study focuses on Indian sociocultural components that impact decision-making and behaviour in the workplace. The research study's geographical focus on India is one of its limitations, since it could restrict its application to other regions. There are also limitations on scalability because the results can apply more to early and mid-stage companies than to big businesses. Moreover, value cascading might be affected by external factors including governmental regulations, industry-specific difficulties, and changes in the economy, making it challenging to separate the impact of organisational culture alone.

1.7 Conclusion

In essence, the culture of an organization powered by values can be as important as innovation and market adaption for the success of Indian startups. As firms scale, cascading these tenets become vital in maintaining a cohesive workplace culture and ensuring sustainability. In order to handle the issues of expansion, cultural diversity, and external disturbances like the COVID-19 pandemic, this research aims to investigate how Indian entrepreneurs integrate, communicate, and uphold their core values. The study seeks to provide startup executives with actionable insights to aid in developing strong, value-oriented organizations, by examining such factors.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Amidst a constantly changing and innovative world, organizations, especially startups, find themselves adapting to a dynamic environment that requires a fresh perspective on their underlying philosophies of operations and engagement. As a result, this research ~~paper~~ tries to examine this phenomenon thoroughly with concrete references to be provided from customers and businesses in India with the aims to understand why the integration of values does play a key role, ways in which this core value disseminate within the organization and how it becomes the foundation for a lively and prosperous corporate culture. This research, thus, envisages addressing both an academic gap and a need for the real-life success of startups in India by considering the lifecycle of value statements from their inception to their actualization in organizational culture. As startups are the builders of future industries, the research intends to serve as a guide, towards building a North Star of enduring organization, culturally rich in their space and valued businesses in Indian startup ecosystem.

Cascading (Communication and Integration) of value statements of startups in India and its Impact on building a culture for its employees Here we use the word Cascade to describe the process of Communication and Integration of the Value statements of startups in India. It's such that leadership strategically disseminates such values across every level of the startup, thus creating a homogenous and unified organisational culture.

And the notion of “cascading” suggests an intentional flow or mechanism of communication for these values. This means not just passing the principles along but establishing them as the foundation for everything an organization does, along with the way it acts and interacts with employees. Part of the communication piece is ensuring that the heartbeat of the startup is alive and well for everyone who's part of the startup machine. Integration takes this facet a step further, instilling these values into the daily habits, processes, and spirit of the organization.

Within Indian startups, which sit at the intersection of myriad cultural nuances and customs with a changing business landscape, the effects of cascading value statements can be tremendous. It guides company culture, helping employees understand what the work environment is like, how they are expected to make choices, how they work together, and many other aspects.

This research seeks to explore this complex dynamic, investigating the ways in which value statements are created, articulated, and implemented in Indian startups. This exploration aims to reveal the details of this domino effect and its inherent influence on how we create an adaptable and thriving organizational culture which encapsulates the guiding principles and vision of its people. To share learnings to help make startup cultures in India more insight-driven, more valuable, more long-lasting.

Culture is the collection of features that makes one organization different from another, and values are one core aspect of this difference. In the case of India, a country extremely deep-rooted in its traditions and values, the importance of these fundamental principles is alluded to even more. This paper aims to provide a sobriquet view on Indian startups and stress the most relevant need to incorporate key values into the DNA of the organisation. It aims to discover how these values are ingrained within the organization, helping in developing a distinctive and resilient corporate culture. Our research seeks to illustrate by deeply exploring this complex relationship how shared values shape employees and the inner workings of the organization.

Cascading value statements and their role in guiding the culture of startups have been widely studied in the field of organizational studies. Our study aims to add to this discussion with a focus on the specific context of Indian startups and their reactions to unprecedented crises.

Conceptual framework

Below is the conceptual framework from the study:

To study how cascading value statements influence Indian Startups organizational culture. The framework is structured by three main variables, independent variables that lead to the process of creating a value base; the mediating variable showing the perceptions and the engagements of employees; and, a dependent variable that indicates the cultural outcome in the organization.

In this research, the independent variable is the cascading of value statements, which represents the processes by which the organization's core values are disseminated and entrenched in a startup. That means modalities such as formalized communication, leaders modeling the optimal behavior and embedding this in critical operational processes including HR policies, performance management and decision-making protocols. Whether cascading values has its

intended effect depends on things like how clearly, they are communicated, whether leaders behave in accordance with values, and whether value-centred behaviors are reinforced in how actual work is practiced day-to-day.

Though the mediating variable in this framework is employee perception and engagement. How effectively communicated values turn into workplace behavior depends on employees understanding the values, accepting the goals of value-driven activities, and actively participating in such value-driven activities. This helps the values become internalized as employees align their actions with organizational expectations and create a sense of purpose and commitment. Now more than ever these mediating roles are becoming increasingly essential, having values statements in place will not guarantee a positive company culture; in fact, it is the degree of employee engagement that will ensure that these statements are lived out as part of the institutional fabric of the organization.

And the outcome you are trying to achieve (dependent variable) is the kind of culture that is generated by a successful integration of values at a startup level. When companies cultivate a strong employee culture, they build an organization where common goals align with company values, so employees are more likely to work harmoniously toward a common goal, all while sharing the core values of the organization; a win-win. Such culture impacts crucial business results such as teamwork, decision-making, employee retention, and innovation. Startups who have solidified their values into their daily routines have a tightly knit work environment that fosters agility, resilience and long-term growth.

Lastly, the study considers external factors, like COVID-19, that have transformed how startups build and convey their beliefs. This has intensified the need for organizations to focus on their internal culture and adapt their value statements, which has been a key consideration for many startups, particularly those adopting newer ways to engage with their team amidst a primarily remote workforce post-pandemic.

Focuses on employee perception of cascading value statements by studying the mapping between top-down organizational behavior and bottom-up perspectives to study the hypothesis cascading value statements leads to an organizational culture which benefit a business in a long run, serves as a case study on how startups in India can actually use it to their advantage.

Hypothesis

Below is the hypothesis formulated for the study:

Hypothesis 1: Communication and Integration of Value Statements and Organizational Culture

H1a: Effective communication of value statements positively impacts employee alignment with organizational culture.

- **H₀ (Null Hypothesis):** Communication of value statements has no significant impact on employee alignment with organizational culture.
- **H₁ (Alternative Hypothesis):** Communication of value statements has a significant positive impact on employee alignment with organizational culture.

H1b: Leadership modeling plays a significant role in embedding values into the startup's culture.

- **H₀:** Leadership modeling has no significant effect on embedding values into the startup's culture.
- **H₁:** Leadership modeling has a significant positive effect on embedding values into the startup's culture.

H1c: Integration of values into HR policies and operational frameworks strengthens organizational culture.

- **H₀:** Integration of values into HR policies and operational frameworks does not significantly strengthen organizational culture.
- **H₁:** Integration of values into HR policies and operational frameworks significantly strengthens organizational culture.

Hypothesis 2: Employee Perception as a Mediator

H2a: Employees' understanding of startup values mediates the relationship between cascading mechanisms and organizational culture.

- **H₀:** Employees' understanding of startup values does not mediate the relationship between cascading mechanisms and organizational culture.
- **H₁:** Employees' understanding of startup values significantly mediates the relationship between cascading mechanisms and organizational culture.

H2b: Higher employee engagement in value-driven activities leads to stronger cultural development.

- **H₀:** Employee engagement in value-driven activities has no significant impact on cultural development.
- **H₁:** Employee engagement in value-driven activities significantly strengthens cultural development.

Hypothesis 3: Impact of COVID-19 on Value-Driven Organizational Culture

H3a: Startups that adapted their value statements to reflect resilience and adaptability during COVID-19 experienced stronger cultural cohesion.

- **H₀:** Adaptation of value statements during COVID-19 has no significant impact on cultural cohesion in startups.
- **H₁:** Adaptation of value statements during COVID-19 has a significant positive impact on cultural cohesion in startups.

H3b: Remote work and crisis management practices influenced how effectively values were cascaded during the pandemic.

- **H₀:** Remote work and crisis management practices did not significantly influence the effectiveness of cascading value statements during the pandemic.
- **H₁:** Remote work and crisis management practices significantly influenced the effectiveness of cascading value statements during the pandemic.

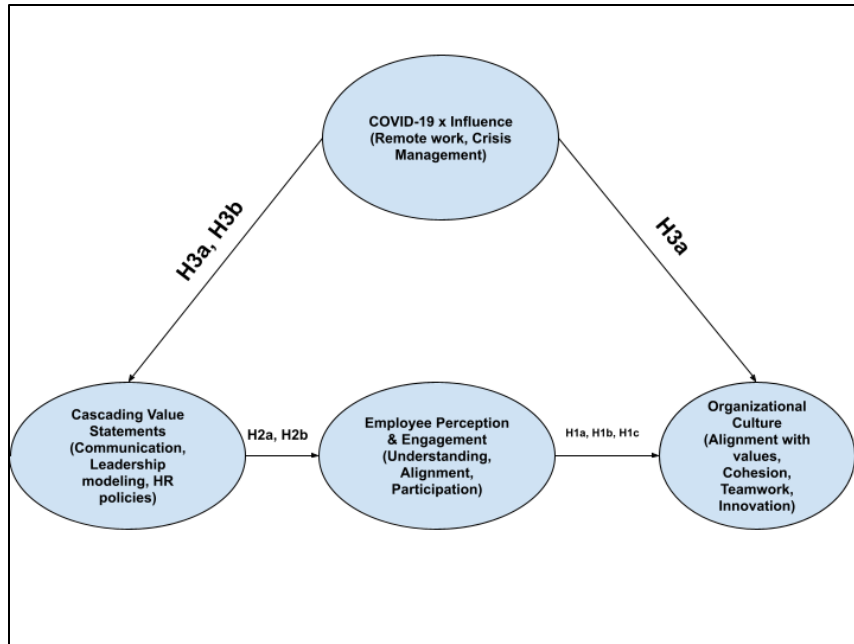


Figure 1

Conceptual Framework

2.1 Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is a complex and often intangible phenomenon, representing the bedrock on which any company's identity, operational standards, and employee experiences are built. A significant definition is provided by Anning-Dorson (2021), who viewed organizational culture as "a pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems." This definition implies that culture (1) is deeply entrenched and historically configured, and (2) is determined by collective problem solving, and hence can be transferred across generations of employees. Extending this work, Geert et al. (2020) suggests that culture is like the "collective programming of the mind" that separates one category of people from another, emphasizing its nature in driving the lens through which both individuals and groups view the world around them. Recent rethinking has in fact emphasized the role of the commonalities of organizational rituals or values or beliefs in establishing the climate in these organisms (Anning-Dorson, 2021). For instance, Zeb et al. (2021) presents a competing values

framework, wherein a wide spectrum of cultural orientations exists from structure/control-oriented cultures at one end to those that value innovation, collaboration, and employee empowerment on the other. Only when viewed as whole do these include all the dimensions of the Carrie that influence all aspects of organizational life, from the strategic to the day-to-day interactions yet another reason to believe in the awesome power of organizational culture. Finally, remote work and the emergence of global teams have added yet another layer of complexity to organizational culture, necessitating the intentional building of a sense of belonging and shared purpose amongst dispersed staff (Gratton, 2021).

There are several theoretical frameworks that describe the emergence and evolution of organizational cultures. This means, as Berger and Luckmann (2023) noticed from the viewpoint of their social construction, I have to recognize that culture is a continuously constructed product generated by an ongoing social interaction and negotiation process in which organizational members engage. By way of shared experiences, conversation, and co-creating meaning in the various processes throughout the organization, people continually negotiated the cultural reality of the organization. Organisational culture is evolving by leveraging these ongoing phenomena that keeps on adapting to internal and external pressures. In contrast, the symbolic-interpretive perspective, which is articulated in the work of Akpa et al. Their research (2021) draws on the symbolic theories of meaning-making, focusing on the symbolic importance of rituals, stories, and language in ensuring the transmission of cultural meaning over generations. They serve as strong mechanisms for codifying cultural norms and values, giving employees a translatable sense of "how things are done around here." On this, Krücken (2021), based in their writings on institutional theory, indicate that organizations frequently mirror the cultural norms and practices accepted, thus being legitimized within their greater institutional context. This phenomenon, referred to as institutional isomorphism, can cause organizations in the same industry or geographic area to develop the same organizational culture as they attempt to conform to the standards and expectations of their industry. Here in the specific context of startup companies, founder-led cultures often hold great power, whereby the founder's personal values, leadership style and vision for the future of the company can engrain cultural values into the emerging organisational fabric (Soleimani & Stauffer, 2024; Sims and Chinta, 2020). Such an early cultural groundwork if neglected can be detrimental and has long-lasting effects on the company's curve with respect to attracting talent, innovating, and adapting to changing market conditions. These

theories help organizations understand their cultural landscape by providing insights into how people behave and make decisions. Additionally, technology adoption and utilization have been heralded as factors influencing organizational culture, as software solutions are shaping communication patterns, collaboration methodologies, and the whole work experience (Edler et al 2023).

The different components of organizational culture usually include certain elements combined into one organic, working mechanism. Values are first and foremost: the defining principles and beliefs that shape behavior and decision at the organization level, serving as a guiding light for employees (Johnson et al., 2022). Such values can be found in mission statements and company policies, but their true significance is reflected in them in practice. The next are norms: the unwritten rules and expectations that describe how employees are meant to behave in each situation, establishing "how to act socially" (Eriksson et al., 2021). These are often at subconscious level but have a strong influence on how employees behave. Assumptions are yet another level beneath both values and norms: the core, often unconscious beliefs held by people that influence how they see and understand the world around them (Anning-Dorson, 2021). These assumptions go largely unexamined and are often hard to surface and put into question. Artifacts the to physical aspects of culture what can be seen and experienced symbols, rituals, stories, physical layout and language that are used as examples of organization values and beliefs (Akpa et al., 2021) While these are clues indicating the organization's culture, their meaning must be interpreted considering the deeper values and assumptions. Finally, practices are the everyday actions and processes adopt and enact to reinforce cultural values and norms, systematically embedding them as part of an organization's culture. These practices include onboarding programs, performance reviews, team meetings, social events, and so on. (This is part of a widerset of interconnected processes that allow for a dynamic cultural eco-system to emerge, based on reciprocity (Assoratgoon & Kantabutra, 2023). A study by Bamidele (2022), for example, noted that rituals and ceremonies are also critical for building an organizational culture, while other studies focused on the function of leaders in shaping and reinforcing the cultural values (Rahmatullah et al., 2022). With changing workplace dynamics, organizations are also inclined towards discovering measures that ensure diversity and psychological safety by creating an inclusive culture (Agarwal and Anantatmula, 2021; Garg and Sangwan, 2021).

Much has been (well) written on the importance of organizational culture to influence employee behavior, decision making and performance. A strong positive culture can help to enhance employee engagement, motivation and commitment to the organization (Naveed et al., 2022). Employees who align with the organization's purpose and values are more productive and engaged and are more likely to innovate and be loyal. Culture is also critical for the design of decision-making systems. Developing a culture that emphasizes collaboration and empowerment will enable employees to be more proactive, encourage the sharing of ideas freely, and empower all members of the organization to make better decisions themselves. Numerous studies show a significant relationship between strong, clear cultures in organizations and better performance than those with weak or maladaptive cultures (Gorton et al., 2022). This linkage is greatly pronounced in the realm of startup businesses, where nimbleness, relentless re-invention and flexibility are vital for longevity and successful scaling. Having a clearly articulated and communicated organizational culture can be used as a cohesive framework for making development and operational decisions, giving startups the ability to act quickly and effectively based on rapidly evolving market information. Also, strong organizational culture can absorb external shocks and uncertainties better than weak ones, providing employees with stability and purpose in uncertain times (Powley and Cameron, 2020). As an example, Gui et al. (2024), found a positive and significant relationship between innovative performance in startups and a strong learning culture, which supports a culture of experimentation, knowledge sharing, and continuous improvement. Additionally, fostering a culture of ethical behavior and social responsibility can strengthen a company's brand image and appeal to socially responsible consumers and employees (Szegedi et al., 2020).

Organisational culture is of even greater significance and influence in the context of startup organisations. Usually, startups function in very fuzzy and fast-evolving landscapes with scarce financial resources of fund or are highly ambiguous (Olek, 2023). The challenges and uncertainty of today's environment make a good culture more important than ever — a strong, well-defined culture can give employees clarity of direction and purpose to really focus on what matters and to drive on with the organisation's strategic goals and objectives. In addition, a strong organizational culture can act as a magnet for the best talent and help retain them as well. Hence startups need to establish so strong and real culture as these people are one of the most talented and eager to work that you need to bring on board to move towards success and scale up your

operations. Recent study by Rodríguez-Sánchez et al. (2021) emphasizes the significance of cultural fit for mergers and acquisitions that encompass startups, showcasing how integration failures and lessened value creation often arise from cultural misalignment. It underscores the importance of thorough due diligence and proactive cultural integration strategies in such transactions. By addressing these ideating factors, one can ensure the development of an organizational culture that is best suited to the Indian context as well as be effective in nature keeping in mind the salient dimensions of employee behavior which are influenced due to field-level mediating factors such as collectivism, powerdistance, and status, which are unique to the Indian context (for focused literature please refer to Gorodnichenko and Roland, 2021; Chaudhuri et al., 2020) According to Durai and Viji (2022), they also explored the influence of cultural values on employee engagement in Indian startups and found that the culture of employee participation and autonomy predict employee engagement positively, thereby implying that some aspect of egalitarian and empowering culture may be more helpful than others. Furthermore, organizations need to be attentive to establish a culture of diversity and inclusion where all employees receive respect and value irrespective of their identity and background (Cumming and Leung, 2021).

For Indian startups, this could mean localising the values to their vernaculars, giving examples from the local culture that signify what they mean, and channels for them to share on how they can be practised on the job. However, failing to do this may also lead to cultural fragmentation and dilution as rapid scaling of a startup is not always easy (Shakeel et al., 2020). startups need to continuously guard what they consider to be the building blocks of their culture, while adjusting them to accommodate the new needs of the organization and its expanding employee base. Illustrating this, Saksena and Mohanty (2020) conducted a case study that examined how the Indian startup managed to stay true to its values whilst experiencing rapid growth with the aid of a well-defined values-oriented training program that helped employees develop better knowledge, understanding and adherence to the company matrix from day one. This will require organizations to be ready to reshape their culture to reflect those changing demographics and to be inclusive of and relevant for all employees (Stahl and Maznevski, 2021). A deep understanding of organizational culture and its profound impact on employee behavior, decision-making processes, and overall performance is crucial for achieving sustained success, particularly for startup companies navigating the dynamic and competitive Indian business landscape. By actively shaping and nurturing a strong, positive, and aligned organizational culture,

startups can create a significant competitive advantage and position themselves for long-term growth and success.

2.2 Value Statements

Value statements are more than a symbolic display; they are the cornerstone of how organizations define their identity, enunciate their guiding philosophies and nurture their preferred culture (Collins and Porras, 2021). They give a careful account of what an organization considers inherently valuable, and they outline the ethical, professional, and operational standards expected of each entity within the organizational framework (Hajar et al., 2022). In the context of Indian startups, typically functioning in a fluid, hyper-competitive, and resource-crimped context, value statements also become an invaluable gift, a kind of steady compass that helps steer decision-making and mold employee action during epochs of rapid expansion, market upheaval, and existential uncertainty. Moreover, a study from Deo (2022) underscored the significance of value statements in the context of ethical decision making among Indian startups in the fin-tech section, which is known to be most problematic due to heavy regulations and possible ethical challenges (Tolbert, 2023). Value statements are the ultimate drivers of organizational activity, from recruitment to performance management to product development to customer service, to create alignment around the principles the company was founded on. That is especially true in the context of India with its rich diversity of cultures, languages, and social norms which demands an explicitly articulated and consistently communicated value system to foster a cohesive, inclusive, and high-performance workplace (Sinha, 2017).

Indeed, the importance of value statements cannot be overstated; individuals have defined their own code of professional conduct from which organizational decisions are made — particularly when ethical lines feel blurred or when the organization is at a new juncture. Grounded on these fundamental beliefs, leaders gain the discretion to act in a way that is naturally aligned with the personality of the organization, its future strategic direction and its obligations to its constituents (Johnson et al., 2022). If, for instance, a startup is investing heavily in the GDS framework of mind, and really values "customer centricity," their decisions on product development, marketing strategies, protocols for customer support, etc., will naturally be evaluated in terms of how it would impact customers' needs, preferences, and overall satisfaction. Trust

breeds loyalty on both sides. In addition, clear value statements will help to guard against the risks that accompany rapid growth since they set the boundaries, identify acceptable behavior, and establish that the company will stand by its values even (or especially) when it is under pressure to compromise those values (Kaptein & Wempe, 2002). This was explored in-depth in a recent study by Sreenivasan and Suresh (2024), which investigated Indian IT startup firms, and provides a striking example of how strategic attention to intangible constructs like the values of "innovation," "continuous learning," and "employee empowerment" have allowed these organisations to flexibly orient to gaps in rapidly changing technological fields, and so maintain a competitive advantage in the global space. On the other hand, not articulating clear and consistent values can result in inconsistent decision-making, breakage of ethics that lead to a lack of trust, and absence of direction, which ultimately damages the reputation of the organization, their competition for attracting top talent in the industry, and their long-term performance (Sarwar et al., 2020).

Furthermore, value statements play a role in guiding employee behavior at all levels for a culture of shared responsibility and accountability. If employees are clear about the values of the organization, and they are committed to it, they will likely seek behaviors that support these values to be expressed at the workplace, which result to increased job satisfaction, engagement, and performance (Kristof-Brown et al., 2023). For example, if a startup is built on the value of "collaboration," they will actively advocate for teamwork, knowledge sharing, and open communication, leading to a more supportive, inclusive and productive workplace. In a country like India, where hierarchy and deep respect for authority lies in the very texture of the national culture, a value that heavily flaunts open communication and employee empowerment can spur employees to express dissent, share new ways of looking at things, and get on to the table with their ideas (Gorodnichenko and Roland, 2021). Kumar et al. (2022), they discovered that Indian SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) with value-oriented cultures experienced greater levels of employee commitment, lower employee turnover rates and higher customer satisfaction scores. However, to enact real change we must acknowledge that a set of values is not quite enough to make it happen. The real power lies in how effectively values are effectively communicated, consistently reinforced, and cascaded for integration throughout every level and department of the organization. Research has revealed that organizations with concrete, successfully cascaded

values report larger employee productivity, higher innovation, and increased customer loyalty (Clutterbuck, 2020).

Putting value statements into practice requires a range of actions, from active communication to regular reinforcement and ultimately embedding values through, for example, onboarding and training for new joiners, as well as performance assessment, promotion criteria and reward systems that lead to rewarding value behaviours (Loureiro et al., 2020). This only happens with unwavering top-down commitment: leaders must role model the values in their own behaviour, advocate them to their teams and hold themselves and others accountable for them (Anning-Dorson, 2021). This ensures that the principles are constantly reiterated and out in the open, making them accessible to the rest of the organization at all levels — in the form of regular town halls about the principles and the relevance of these principles to the current challenges; storytelling that brings to life the ways in which employees have exemplified the values in their work; and recognition programs that materially reward behaviors in line with the organization's core principles. A study by Dura and Viji (2022) on Indian startups shows that organizations that cascade their values in the best manner witness higher employee buy-in, better sense of shared purpose, and greater interdepartmental communication. Without proper cascading, value statements run the risk of becoming little more than platitudes, with little real impact on employee behaviour or on building a cohesive, inspiring organisational culture. Also, since the Indian culture is not homogeneous, the cascading process must be customized to the requirements of various linguistic backgrounds, social backgrounds, and cultures of the Indian population (Shi, 2023).

Effective cascading of value statements leads to the alignment of individual employee objectives with overall organizational objectives. Employees are undoubtedly more motivated, engaged and committed to their work when they know exactly how their personal objectives align with the broader organization and they feel their personal beliefs resonate with the organization's fundamental beliefs (Gebreiter, 2020). This, in turn, results in better KPI benchmarks, greater innovation velocity, and a more robust and sustainable competitive advantage in the market. Those companies with an important "social impact" value who work with initiatives that directly meet these challenges will see employees passionate about working for the company and engaged in practices to make sure they contribute to the objectives of the company. A study by Shaji et al.

(2020) on Indian social enterprises suggest that mission-powered organizations with deep value-driven culture have greater success in attracting and retaining impact-focused employees.

Overall, value statements are not a nice to have; they serve as a powerful strategic means of informing decision-making at an organizational level in terms of employee behavior and organizational culture, especially when the Indian startup landscape is changing at lightning speed. But the real power of value statements is in how widely, how consistent, how effectively, and how holistically they are communicated and then cascaded throughout all levels and functions of the organization. Focusing on and genuinely instilling shared values throughout every level of the business is a critical aspect of leadership — helping individuals identify with the goals of the corporation, creating a sense of camaraderie that leads to a motivated and engaged workforce who is not only uplifted and strive for success as tangible (i.e. exceeded profitability or sales goals), but as a shared commitment to the company as a whole and maintaining a sustainable business model. Moreover, longitudinal studies are required to systematically evaluate the long-term influence of value-oriented cultures on the overall performance, innovativeness, and long-term viability of Indian startups, which would offer significant learnings to both practitioners and scholars. Finally, it would be key to explore how value statements can be used to navigate cross-cultural collaborations, which are becoming more common due to the drive for Indian startups to enter global markets (Chen, 2024).

2.3 Cascading Mechanisms

The development of a strong organizational culture is now increasingly accepted as a key factor behind the success of Indian startups, driving employee engagement, performance and sustainability (Rajani, 2023). A large part of culture building is the ability to communicate the core values of the startup and then cascade them effectively throughout the organization. Cascading is the process of the organization strategically transmitting the organization value statements from the leadership through all levels of the organization to ensure that these are understood, embraced, and incorporated into the day-to-day operation and behaviors of employees (Anning-Dorson, 2021). In the context of the Indian startup ecosystem, which is frequently marked by hypergrowth, a varied workforce, and a fast-paced environment, this process is crucial. It is in such an environment, where a clearly identified and constant sense of

value systems will be a great basis to provide cohesion and sense of common purpose (Rajani, 2023). The contribution of value system to competitive advantage and market value can only be leveraged if the organizational culture is in enmesh with the business strategy, recent research has emphasised. In addition, research on organizational behaviour suggests that robust culture is related negatively to employee turnover and positively to organisational commitment. This is vital for Indian startups who compete fiercely for talent with established Multinational Corporations. Also, in the recent years when many organizations adopted new remote and hybrid work models, value cascading tasks have been driven by the flexible work structure, which is very different than the values that can be realized (Fayard et al., 2021).

A good value cascading strategy is made with a lot of key elements in mind that prove to be key to overall success. A multifaceted approach to communication is the backbone of an initiative like this, which goes far beyond announcing the policy change alone. Largely through town halls, newsletters, training programs, digital platforms, and workshops on how values are lived. The open dialogue and transparency are critical; employees at all levels must comprehend why the values exist and those who are feeling insecure must feel comfortable asking and providing feedback. Additionally, leadership modeling — if leaders do not exhibit the values themselves in their own behavior, values cannot effectively cascade. Leaders must embody champions of the values that are visible in decision-making and actions around the core principles. This means modeling the values in daily interactions, mentoring employees to those values, and recognizing and rewarding behaviors consistent with the organization value system. Leadership and management literature highlights the significance of authentic leadership in shaping an organization culture, where leaders lead by example and create a sense of trust and psychological safety among its members. This is even more relevant in all hierarchically organized societies like India, where the actions of higher levels leaders inform the assumptions and behaviors of employees. Third, integration into operations is critical. Values should not be viewed as distinct from everyday work but integrated across all core processes. If innovation is a core value, the performance management system needs to reward employees who come up with new ideas and take risks. This integration might also make values more visible and less symbolic (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1996) as values become embedded in organizational operations. In addition, recent studies indicate that it is possible to use factors such as gamification or other interactive techniques to promote any values, with the aim of having employees adhere to and internalise them (Landers,

2014). Implementing play and competition into training and development programs can make learning more engaging and memorable for employees.

But know that the cascading of values does have its challenges. The first key challenge is being authentic. And employees are very good at noticing disconnects between values on paper and behaviors in practice. When values are perceived to be in-authentic, values turn to cynicism and disengagement. In the Indian context, where culture and power differences play a huge part on how values are seen and acted upon, this is of great importance. An organization may espouse values such as "employee empowerment", but if those employees do not feel like they have a voice, and/or they do not have autonomy in their decision making, the value may be undermined. Importantly, also how to stop values from becoming slogans. This implies continued hard work to mentally deliver those values through communication, leading by example, and integration in operational processes. In addition to that, it needs regular diagnosis of the degree of which the values are lived in the organization and corrections (Zeb et al., 2021). According to literature, a strong focus on employee feedback along with the willingness to update the values as an organization mature can help to steer the values away from being stale or irrelevant, Naveed et al., 2022. In Indian startup lens, that means immersing themselves in local cultural idioms and being willing to adjust the customary value cache to capture the needs and wants of the people this value system will be applied to. Without such consideration, it becomes exceedingly difficult to determine if all players share the same attitude or interpretation of cultural values, especially since cross-cultural management research shows the role of cultural intelligence (CQ) in providing a more adaptive work environment for team members in shared workspaces. An organization needs to put in the time and effort to develop a culture of inclusivity and respect, and this starts with CQ — training programs for employees, inclusion initiatives, and a workplace that values diverse perspectives.

Overall, the cascading of values statement is essential mechanism for creating a strong organizational culture in Indian startups. Key strategies for ensuring the values are understood, embraced, and embedded into the daily behaviors of employees are effective communication, leadership modeling, and integration into operations. Although the risks for authenticity are major in terms of ensuring the elements of values do not become rhetorical devices commonplace, this requires constant re-enablement and understanding of the cultural context into which they are

being integrated. One area of exploration could be determining better practices of value cascading that are specific to the Indian startup ecosystem, given the unique challenges and opportunities of this vibrant and fast-changing domain. More specific questions come to mind, such as the function of technology in value dissemination and cultural diversity effects on the values interpretation. The movement of value from one small organization to another plays a key role in shaping a positive and productive work environment, which, as some experts have estimated, is essential for Indian startups to drive innovation and ensure employee engagement as well as long-term success. Such initiative could yield longitudinal research to determine the long-term consequences of value cascading on effectiveness and permanence of organizations. Further, scholars need to examine employee advocacy and internal influencers as value promoters and culture owners. Finally, research is needed on the impact of organizational storytelling on value cascading, as stories can serve as a potent mechanism for communicating values in more relatable and memorable approaches.

2.4 Impact of Values on Startups

These elements, when effectively communicated and integrated throughout the structure, can create a strong and resilient culture that empowers employees to work towards a common goal, contributing to long-term sustainable growth (Anning-Dorson, 2021). Articulating and cascading value statements—the formulation of value statements in the executive ranks that trickle down to the very bottom tiers of any department—is arguably a purposeful avenue through which the ethos of the startup can be manifest (Ahsan, 2025). In India, it only gets more complex, due to the disparity in the cultural backgrounds of its talent pool and the hyper-growth path most startups are on. As Pathania and Tanwar (2024) recently indicated in a study, culturally informed value statements can be more powerful for startups in Indian cultures that value traditional ethics, as values that reflect local ethos are adopted and propagated by employees. Using a lot of references of diploma works, research papers and case studies, this literature review will explore how the concept of cascading value statements considerably shapes and influences the informal organizational culture for employees in startups in Indian setting. Additionally, we will examine how we can adapt value-driven leadership in the new paradigm of Indian startups with the focus on ethical leadership, responsible innovation, internationalization, etc.

A rich startup culture is built upon a common understanding and steadfast commitment to a few key principles. Anning-Dorson, 2021) Such values serve as a navigational tool to approach decision successes, shape how employees approach challenges and implement goals, and what services or products the organization ultimately produces and what distinguishing brand proposition it stands for. A growing body of evidence shows that organisations with a closely defined and effectively communicated set of values enjoy much greater employee engagement, increased productivity, and a measurable reduction in employee churn metrics (Collins and Porras, 2021). Employees who have a clear understanding of the values that support the mission and purpose of their organization are significantly more likely to feel connected to the company goals and engage in the overall success of the organization. But it is important to note that just talking about values is not enough; they need to be cascaded down and ingrained in the startup's internal processes (Ahsan, 2025). This cascading process is not simply communicating the value statements through conventional means such as posters or intranet postings. It means leadership not only describing these values but also living them in his or her daily life; managers actively supporting them within their teams; HR building these values into recruiting practices, performance management systems and reward structures. A study from Amit & Zott (2020) provides for example an argument on the importance of a clear value proposition that is consistent with company's core values and hence consistent with the full customer experience. In the Indian scenario, where hierarchical structures may creep into even startup styles of working environments, we also need leaders who are experienced and accordingly motivated to exhibit these principles (Gorodnichenko and Roland, 2021). Moreover, new research emphasizes the significance of digital platforms in preserving these values. Some startups use internal social media and communication channels to create narratives and show the employees who (ideally) represent the company's values (Vrontis et al., 2021).

Value chain evolution In India, the Startup ecosystem has a unique combination of challenges and opportunities. Fast-paced growth experienced by many startups usually leads to aggressive hiring, attracting employees from various backgrounds, experiences, educations and cultural trains of thoughts. And while it certainly creates a great strength of diversity within the startup, it also presents an enormous challenge to make sure that every single employee grasps the full implications of the startup's values and embodies them throughout their work. Moreover, the extreme focus on continuous growth, fundraising, and obtaining market share can create an

environment where culture, purpose, and values take a back seat (Ding et al., 2023). In contrast, numerous empirical studies repeatedly demonstrate that startups that live, breathe, and foster their values right off the bat tend to attract and retain the best talent, build a solid and reputable brand, and effectively manoeuvre through the challenges that undoubtedly emerge throughout the scaling process (Al-Surmi et al, 2020).-Although jugaad resourceful improvisation value can be extremely useful for addressing resource constraints and creating agility, it must be fairly traded off against other key values including, but not limited to, ethical behavior, an unyielding focus on innovation, and unshakeable customer centricity to enable sustainable and responsible growth (Clauss, 2023). The importance of value-based business models, in which purpose and profit are combined, is further demonstrated by the rise of social enterprises in India (Akter et al., 2020). Such enterprises are typically focused on social impact and environmental sustainability, and their values are well aligned with the community needs. But the effective application of value cascading is still fraught with challenges in Indian startups. The constant urgency to expand can also sometimes shortcut the cascade process; as a result, employees may not have a deep understanding of or internalize. Additionally, a lack of clearly defined and measurable metrics for evaluating the performance of value alignment can hinder the assessment of these initiatives and provide foundations to be improved in a justifiable manner. As companies can also find it difficult to align their values with the day-to-day reality as the company grows, there is a potential mismatch between stated values and actual values (Argyris, 1990). Thus, this further necessitates the need for Indian startups to lay emphasis on good communication strategies, extensive leadership development programs and sound performance management systems, all of which should emphasise their values consistently. It also means there needs to be dedicated to improving overtime, and being willing to adapt the cascading process as the company grows and develops. In addition, startups are making data privacy, algorithm bias, and the responsible use of artificial intelligence more important ethical topics (Arocena et al., 2022). Ethical responsibility is being aware of and acting of these challenges that startups face and how they adapt this with their vision.

After all, cascading of value statements is one of the critical components in creating a strong sustainable culture for the employees and the startups in India. Startups that clearly articulate and promote their values create a shared framework within their organization that aligns employees, boosts morale, and cultivates long-term success. However, companies like Zomato and Flipkart prove that the right values can transform any organization and propel it towards

success despite the challenges it may face. Further exploration should be targeted at both developing frameworks for assessing the impact of value cascading, and mechanisms to enable best practices for evolving values as firms scale and the role of technology in aiding value communication and diffusion across the Indian startup ecosystem. Understanding these pieces will help Indian startups leverage the transformative potential of values to create lasting and meaningful organizations. Future studies should also investigate globalization's impact on values in Indian startups and the best way for companies to align their direction by leveraging their cross-cultural communication skills to build an Indian multinational firm (Hampden-Turner et al., 2020). In conclusion, Values-driven leadership is going to be paramount for the long-term success and sustainability of not just Indian startups but by and large startups in the global ecosystem.

2.5 COVID-19 Implications

Cascading, value statements are intended to ensure that the organization's beliefs and priorities are ingrained in each individual employee, across all levels of a company (Collins and Porras, 2021). Cascading these values effectively ensures that they not only guide decision making, but influence employee behavior, and ultimately contribute to an organization with a unified identity and purpose. It is not simply distributing a list of values; a systemic approach is needed to convert abstract beliefs into real actions and behaviors that are continually reinforced throughout the organization (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1996). Previous studies (e.g., Anning-Dorson, 2021) have highlighted the role of leadership commitment and ongoing communication in effectively instilling these values. A successful leader clearly communicates the values but also, she/he embodies them and walks the talk, prompting accountability and authenticity to take root (Gorton, et. al, 2022). But the abrupt transition to remote work and widespread economic uncertainty caused by the pandemic disrupted regular communication channels, resulting in the emergence of new barriers to effectively cascading values in Indian startups. Indian startups, which tend to have an informal communication style and close-knit office culture, around the world struggled to achieve the same level of connection and cultural cohesion when employees were dispersed (Malik et al., 2021). The ad hoc discussions at the proverbial water-cooler, serendipitous brainstorming, and other shared office experiences that helped embed values were dramatically reduced (Prasad, et al., 2020). It revealed weaknesses in a lot of organizations' approach to communicating their value and lacked the structure and intentionality needed. Furthermore, the

additional stress and anxiety brought on by the pandemic might have inhibited employees' ability to internalize and embrace organizational values (see Brooks et al., 2020).

For many Indian startups, the pandemic threw the typical approach to communicating and embedding values out the window, requiring a hastily planned digital transformation. A growing dependency on digital communication platforms, including video conferencing and internal social networks, proved helpful for staying connected and culture (Ågerfalk et al., 2020). Startups took advantage of tools such as Slack, Microsoft Teams and company-specific online forums to enable communication, collaboration and socializing. Numerous startups adopted transparent and frequent communication strategies providing constant updates on the company's financial information, strategic direction, and help programs for employees (Dirani et al., 2020). Leaders increasingly adopted a tone of empathy in their communications, as employees faced personal and professional chaos. This meant offering practical support like flexible work arrangements and mental health resources but also providing an opportunity for employees to openly share their concerns and experiences (Veenhoven, 2024). In fact, a few startups even took the initiative of revisiting and reaffirming their core values, reaffirming those which were highly relevant in the phase of crisis (like resilience, innovation, and customer-focused). In healthcare technology, for instance, a startup might have reaffirmed their focus on “patient-centricity” and “innovation” to help inform the solutions it was developing to address the pandemic. These changes were designed to reassure the organization of its commitment to its values and provide a sense of stability and direction in an uncertain environment. Additionally, employing digital channels allowed startups to connect with larger and more geographically diverse talent input, which could help increase diversity and create more inclusive cultures (Hill et al., 2024).

There are key determinants of workplace engagement and survival of corporations. An effective, value-driven culture can contribute to improving employee engagement during difficult times (Byrne, 2022). A sense of purpose keeps employees on track – when they know what they are doing matters and contributes to something bigger, they tend to be actively engaged and committed to their work. Most of the startups which successfully cascaded their values during the pandemic achieved a high level of employee morale, motivation, and commitment (Maheshwari, 2022). Attention was paid to talent retention, as Covid witnessed increased poaching of talent to other more equipped players in tech. Employees were more likely to be loyal and invest in the

success of their company if they felt they were in line with the values of their organization. In contrast, organisations whose startups didn't get the messaging right on values saw diminished levels of employee engagement, higher turnover and lower overall organisational performance. Lack of clarity around values can even lead to employee burnout and mental health problems, which later lead to production reduction (Bakker et al., 2023). According to a recent survey from (Santra et al., 2020) there was a direct relationship found between transparency in value messaging and lowering the employee stress during peak pandemic time in Indian startups.

Safety of an organization during a recession (especially during a pandemic) is not just defined in terms of whether it could survive in terms of not getting shut down but also how innovation can help an organization adapt and remain relevant in the changing environment. Startups with a robust value-driven culture were better suited to do it (Forman, 2020). Innovation and customer focus, for example, sparked creative problem solving and new products and services designed for the pandemic context. Some startups, for example, pivoted to provide solutions for remote collaboration, online education or contactless delivery. One of those core values, resilience, was what made people persevere through obstacles and maintain a strong perspective. On the other side, startups that documented their way through the crisis would not only make it out alive from the pandemic, but also stronger and more competitive than before. Jha (2020) mentioned more research that with value-based decision making the startups did well and more flexible workforce was maintained. Such flexibility also applied to transitioning to new business models and diversifying sources of revenue to cushion springs from the economic setback. Nonetheless, the downside to adapting is that not every adaptation worked. While cutting costs, some startups found it difficult not to compromise on employee well-being at the same time, ending up in ethical dilemmas, and ultimately losing trust. Layoffs, salary cuts, and cut benefits, although not out of the realm of the possible for survival, come at a potential cost to the values the company was trying to uphold (Carroll, 2021). This all is an advocacy for transparency and goodwill in organization during crisis management.

To sum it all up, the COVID-19 pandemic was a litmus test on the EMERGENCE of value driven cultures in Indian startups. The capacity to successfully cascade value statements, customize communication methods, and encourage a feeling of connectivity throughout the workforce became paramount to upholding employee engagement and ensuring on organizational

survival. Although the pandemic brought about extraordinary challenges, it also offered a unique opportunity for startups to double down on their cultures and set up stronger, more resilient organizations. However, there are still several areas of research that would benefit from further exploration, including, but not limited to, 1) identifying best practices for cascading values in a remote and hybrid work environment, 2) the role of technology in enabling value communication, and 3) the long-term impact of the pandemic on the culture of Indian startups. Research could examine which e-tools and platforms work best for communicating values and how to analyse the impact these activities have on behaviours and performance in the workplace. In addition, the study highlights the need to explore how startups can develop and cultivate a culture of psychological safety among startup employees that encourages them to speak up and question the status quo (even remotely) (Agarwal and Anantatmula, 2021).

2.6 Research Gap

Special attention throughout the field of organizational studies is now being paid to core values and organizational culture because these elements drive employee engagement along with organizational success. The available research about Indian startup value propagation shows an important knowledge gap because it examines this phenomenon too narrowly. Scholarly research about this topic is mostly studies well-established organizations which possess established infrastructure and resources. Research presently fails to provide solutions for startup-specific conditions which emerge from rapid expansion combined with resource limitations as well as constant organizational adaptation requirements. The early development stage of startups provides a particular setting which allows value dissemination and internalization to happen with both heightened effectiveness and increased vulnerability compared to established firms. Rapid value dissemination results from the lack of established structures yet the unsupervised spread might cause values to get lost or distorted when no proper management exists for the cascading process. Startup founders and their leaders find few concrete research-based solutions in existing knowledge to handle the complex process of developing value-based organizational culture.

The present academic literature chooses wide and abstract organizational culture approaches without exploring the details of multiple stages that value statements must pass through. Research into organizational culture primarily covers different aspects with little attention

on understanding specific mechanisms that enable value transmission across an organization. The current research fails to show an effective approach for startup organizations to convert declared values into actual organizational standards and conduct. Given that value cascading involves more than basic statement production, organizations must dedicate prolonged attention to make principles infused across all organizational levels and determine business decisions and interpersonal interactions and operational activities. A clear understanding of value statement cascading remains essential for startups to avoid meaningless platitudes because it determines their ability to influence organizational culture and employee conduct. Research must advance from its current assessment of organizational culture to explore precise implementation strategies and management difficulties which lead to successful core value propagation inside startup companies.

The specific cultural aspects and economic factors of Indian startup businesses remain ignored by numerous academic publications. Distinct cultural elements of Indian society which unite traditional customs with modern ambitions and an advancing business sector create specific barriers and prospects for startup organizations as they develop value-driven organizational cultures. Research fails to investigate the effects which cultural diversity and "Jugaad" mentality combined with local business practices have on how value statements are interpreted and implemented. Fast-growing Indian startups face difficulties in cultural development because they must constantly seek funds and prove profitability which results in a challenging environment. Future research about Indian startup culture should focus exclusively on cultural dynamics within this ecosystem alongside specific entrepreneurial obstacles. A sufficient grasp of Indian startup dynamics remains essential for developing successful methods that establish employee-linked values together with innovation abilities and long-term organizational growth. Research about value cascading in Indian startups needs strong cultural sensitivity combined with context-dependent analysis to be effective.

The current research fails to explain the effects that value statement cascading processes have on establishing organizational cultures within the Indian startup sector. The research studies demonstrate merits, but they do not effectively analyze the obstacles and advantages which arise for new businesses during their initial development stage. The limitations of existing studies, their focus on large established organizations, a lack of research on general organizational culture and finally a limited focus on the Indian context all call for dedicated research. A focused evaluation

of value cascading mechanisms along with challenges and outcomes must be performed in the Indian startup ecosystem because its unique economic context requires thorough study. Research into this unexamined field will create essential knowledge that startup leaders and founders together with HR experts require for building value-based workplace cultures that boost staff dedication and stimulate innovative outcomes and sustainable expansion throughout the Indian startup market.

CHAPTER III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative research approach to investigate how Indian companies include their fundamental values into their corporate structure. The emphasis is on comprehending complex processes, methods, and tactics by which values are found, expressed, and operationalized inside these dynamic and changing companies. This study seeks to expose complex insights on the cultural frameworks supporting startup settings in India by combining in-depth interviews with important startup executives with the examination of current secondary data sources.

The study is intended as an exploratory investigation seeking to identify trends and develop ideas rather than test predefined hypotheses to reach these aims. Targeting people in leadership roles with great awareness of the internal dynamics of their companies, survey questionnaires and semi-structured interviews will be the major tools for primary data collecting. To guarantee data triangulation and strengthen the validity of the conclusions, this is matched by a careful review of secondary sources like firm value statements, mission documents, news releases, and pertinent industry publications.

Fifteen to twenty startup leaders from different sectors and growth phases around India would be the main subjects of the initial data gathering. Purposive sampling will help to steer participant choice, therefore guaranteeing the presence of people with pertinent expertise in forming and supporting corporate culture. Depending on convenience, interviews—which run 45 to 60 minutes—will be done in person or via video conference. To preserve accuracy, all interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim; participants' consent will be requested ahead of time. With suitable consent procedures, survey tools will also be distributed with an eye toward issues including value identification, communication techniques, and cultural integration.

Validating main conclusions and offering background information will depend much on secondary data. Public records, internal company records, media coverage, and reports from consulting and industry research companies will all be used to provide a complete picture of the startup ecosystem and assist to triangulate findings gained from polls and interviews.

The study will use a theme method for analysis so that the researcher may find and understand trends across the dataset. The approach consists in several phases: familiarization with the data by repeated readings; systematic coding of important data segments; grouping codes into themes; and improvement of these themes to capture the central narrative developing from the data. Developed to show the connections between subjects, a thematic map will guide the last study and report.

This research depends fundamentally on ethical integrity. Participants will be thoroughly educated on the goals and methods of the study, under strict confidentiality and anonymity policies. Data will be kept safe and applied just for academic needs.

Notwithstanding its advantages, the approach has certain limits. Purposive sample and qualitative emphasis could restrict the generalizability of the results to the larger startup scene. Moreover, depending just on self-reported data raises the likelihood of bias. Still, this study hopes to shed important light on how Indian entrepreneurs create value-driven cultures, thus providing a basis for next studies using either quantitative approaches or comparative international analysis.

3.1 Research Design

Any academic project begins with the fundamental framework shaped by the research strategy. It is the overall scheme a researcher follows to order and coordinate numerous elements of the research so that methodological rigor, coherence, and clarity are accomplished. From the development of research questions to data collecting, measurement, and analysis, research design—as Creswell and Creswell (2017) claim—is a blueprint guiding the full research process. By means of a methodical plan for how research will be carried out, the research design guarantees that the research topic is appropriately addressed and that the objectives of the study are accomplished with methodological precision. A well-organized research strategy integrates validation and data interpretation approaches, forecasts possible challenges, points out pertinent data sources, chooses suitable tools and procedures, and combines Along with helping ideas and variables to be operationalized, it also embeds ethical considerations guaranteeing transparency, repeatability, and conformity with academic standards of the research process.

Thus, the choosing of a proper study design is a fundamental decision that significantly influences the integrity, trustworthiness, and applicability of research results. Design and research

problem mismatches could lead to methodological conflicts, inadequate knowledge, or erroneous findings. Conversely, a well-matched design enhances the logical flow of the research, raises the validity and dependability of the findings, and thus enriches the already in use body of knowledge contribution. When choosing a design, researchers have to consider numerous factors like the type of research question, the kind of data needed, the study environment, accessible resources, and ethical considerations. This rigorous attention guarantees not only theoretically sound but also practically practicable and contextually relevant research approaches.

Usually, research designs fit three primary categories: mixed-methodologies, qualitative, and quantitative methods. Regarding methodological approaches, epistemological roots, and characterizations that match different sorts of research problems, each one of these paradigms is special. Usually used for statistical analysis of variables, testing hypotheses, or investigating causal linkages is quantitative research designs. St rooted in positivist traditions, they stress objectivity, measurement, and generalizability. On the other hand, qualitative designs enable one to explore challenging occurrences, understand meanings, and translate experiences in natural surroundings. Grounded in interpretivist concepts, qualitative research values depth, context, and subjectivity. Mixed methods combine qualitative and quantitative elements by utilizing the strengths of both paradigms, therefore allowing a more complete study of research topics. This is especially useful when the study question calls both numerical data and contextual knowledge. Creating meaningful, trustworthy, and strong research rests mostly on the selection and application of a good study design.

3.1.1 Quantitative Research Design

Quantitative research design is essentially about objectivity and the collecting of numerical data fit for statistical analysis to uncover patterns, correlations, or variances (Bryman, 2016). Usually trying to extend findings from a sample to a larger population, this approach evaluates pre-defined hypotheses. Common quantitative methods are experiments, organized observations, closed-ended question surveys, and secondary numerical data analysis—that is, government statistics and financial reports. Surveys, for instance, allow researchers to gather from numerous participants attitudes, opinions, or actions that can then be totaled and analyzed for patterns (Fowler, 2013). Usually under controlled conditions, experimental designs are applied to establish cause-and- effect linkages by means of one or more independent variables and observable impacts

on dependent variables. The power of quantitative design is defined by its ability to provide specific, measurable, statistically significant results—which can be easily collated, compared, and generalized. It may thus overlook the intricacies, background, and complexity of human experience and social events as well as the "why" underlying recorded patterns (Creswell and Creswell, 2017).

3.1.2 Qualitative Research Design

Using the participants, qualitative research design stresses developing a complete awareness of human behavior, experiences, and the social environment (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Usually generating descriptive, non-numerical data, it is exploratory in character and searches for meanings, interpretations, and the richness of context. Common qualitative methods are in-depth interviews (semi-structured or unstructured), focus group discussions, ethnographic observation, case studies, and content analysis of textual or visual data (Patton, 2014). For example, semi-structured interviews allow researchers to closely examine participants' points of view, therefore promoting flexibility in the discussion and more thorough understanding. Case studies involve extensive examination of one unit—e.g., an individual, business, or event—to understand its complexity and setting. Rich, comprehensive, contextualized data—qualitative research excels in providing nuanced understanding of challenging occurrences. Developing hypotheses, exploring unexplored study ground, and understanding processes all benefit especially from it. Still, the findings of qualitative research can match a given situation and might not be easily relevant to more general populations. Moreover, arbitrary is the way qualitative data is interpreted; the process could take time as well (Ridder, 2014).

3.1.3 Mixed-Methods Research Design

Mixed-methods study design is the compiling, analysis, and merging of qualitative and quantitative data inside one or a set of studies (Creswell and Clark, 2017). The fundamental principle of this approach is that, applied jointly, quantitative and qualitative approaches provide a more whole knowledge of the research problem than any method by itself. Combining the benefits of both methods will enable researchers to balance the drawbacks of each, therefore generating more robust and sophisticated results (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2010). Mixed-methods designs can take various forms, such as convergent parallel design (where quantitative and qualitative data are collected concurrently and then merged), explanatory sequential design (where

quantitative data is collected and analyzed first, followed by qualitative data collection to help explain the quantitative results), or exploratory sequential design (where qualitative data is collected and analyzed first to explore a phenomenon, followed by quantitative data collection to generalize findings or test a new instrument). All of which define the specific mixed-methods design that will be used (Creswell and Clark, 2017)—the research questions, the weight given to each data type, and the timing of data collecting and analysis. Complex research projects needing both breadth (from quantitative data) and depth (from qualitative data) find this approach very useful.

Chosen Research Design

Using mixed methodologies in addition to a qualitative research approach, this study investigates how Indian entrepreneurs include their core principles into their organizational culture. While including survey results and secondary data such as company records, press releases, and media stories, the main emphasis is on gathering rich, contextual data by semi-structured interviews. Because it enables in-depth investigation of complicated and nuanced processes like value integration, which cannot be totally reflected by quantitative measures alone, the qualitative approach is especially appropriate for this research. An area most suited for qualitative research, the study aims to grasp the lived experiences, interpretations, and tactics of company founders.

The exploratory character of the research informs the justification for choosing a qualitative method. A flexible and interpretive research methodology is needed since the goal is to grasp the processes by which startups identify, interact with values into their organizational practices. A profoundly ingrained and context-specific phenomena, organizational culture is revealed by qualitative approaches through the complex narratives that expose how values are absorbed and articulated. While the use of survey data and secondary sources adds another degree of triangulation, hence improving the validity and dependability of the results, semi-structured interviews give the chance to delve closely into the experiences and perceptions of startup leaders. The study keeps a qualitative-dominant mixed methods orientation even if survey data is incorporated to gather some organized feedback.

Inspired mostly by Edgar Schein's Model of Organizational Culture and Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory, theoretical frameworks anchored in organizational culture studies direct this research. With three levels— artifacts, promoted values, and basic underlying assumptions, Schein's approach provides a helpful prism through which one may view how organizational values are evolved and articulated at several levels. It also emphasizes how important leadership is in entertainment and reinforcement of these principles. Though mostly applied for cross-cultural research, Hofstede's framework clarifies the cultural background of Indian entrepreneurs and offers a more general knowledge of how national culture shapes organizational behavior. These ideas guide the creation of survey and interview questions as well as offer a framework for data analysis with respect to value communication, leadership impact, and employee behavior.

Particularly closely matched with the goals of the study is the selected research design. It advances the research on how Indian entrepreneurs define and express their basic values, the methods and channels of communication they use, and how these values are operationalized in regular business life. By allowing the study to concentrate on depth rather than breadth, the qualitative approach provides thorough insights that might guide academic knowledge as well as pragmatic value integration techniques for startups. All things considered, this theoretical framework and research strategy offer a cogent and strong means of investigating the cultural dynamics inside Indian companies.

3.2 Sampling

Any strong research design is built upon a sound sampling framework. It describes the all-encompassing method or approach used to choose from a greater population a subset of people, groups, or units for inclusion into research (Kothari, 2004). This structure is essential since the sample acts as the representative body from which knowledge on the general population is gathered. Making sure the selected sample fairly reflects the main traits of the target population is the main objective of a well-built sampling system. Once this is accomplished, the researcher can reasonably securely extend the results and conclusions of the study to the whole population (Saunders et al., 2009). Consequently, the generalizability, validity, and dependability of the research results strongly depend on the sampling structure.

Choosing a sample technique is not a simple chore; it has important consequences on the validity and rigor of the research hence it should be done deliberately. By reducing selection bias and sampling error, a carefully selected sampling technique helps to strengthen the research (Creswell and Clark, 2017). Two main groups define sampling methods generally: non-probability sampling and probability sampling. Random selection processes underlie probability sampling, therefore guaranteeing that every unit of the population has a known and non-zero chance of being chosen. Non-probability sampling, on the other hand, relies on non-random techniques such as convenience, judgment, or referrals—often utilized when probability-based approaches are not feasible.

3.2.1 Probability Sampling Techniques

This technique is defined by the concept of probability sampling, also known as random sampling, that every unit in the population has a known, non-zero chance of being selected for the sample (Bryman and Bell, 2015.). This known probability lets the statistical estimate of sampling error possible and increases the representativeness of the sample, so fitting for study aiming for generalization to the larger population. Important techniques of probability sampling consist in:

- Simple Random Sampling (SRS) is among the most basic techniques within this heading. Every person in the population has an equal and independent opportunity of being chosen under SRS. Usually employed for the selection procedure are techniques including computerized random number generators or lottery systems (Kothari, 2004). Simplicity and justice are praised qualities of this approach. However, logistical difficulties may not guarantee the inclusion of significant subgroups unless the population is totally homogeneous, therefore it can become useless for big populations.
- By choosing every k -th person from a list following random selection of a beginning point, systematic sampling adds a component of structure (Saunders et al., 2009). Dividing the population by the intended sample size determines the sampling interval k . Although it can be more efficient for big datasets and usually simpler to apply than SRS, it runs the danger of periodicity bias—especially if the population list contains a hidden order that corresponds with the sampling interval, therefore distorting the results.

- Based on pertinent factors as age, gender, employment, or organizational type, stratified random sampling partitions the population into mutually exclusive and generally exhaustive subsets known as strata. A random sample—either simple or systematic—is taken inside every stratum (Bryman and Bell, 2015). This approach guarantees that the final sample reflects all important subgroups proportionately, therefore raising the general representativeness and hence the precision of subgroup estimates. While some subgroups are purposefully overrepresented to enable thorough study, stratified sampling can be either proportionate—where sample sizes reflect the actual proportions of the population—or disproportionate.
- Cluster sampling turns out to be a good substitute when it is difficult to compile a comprehensive list of the whole population—especially if the population is big and scattered. Under this method, a random sample of clusters—often based on geography or institutional affiliation—e.g., businesses, towns, or schools—is chosen from the population that is split in clusters. Either all people in those clusters are surveyed (one-stage sampling) or a random sample of people is picked from inside each specified cluster (two-stage sampling) (Kothari, 2004). Although cluster sampling is logistically practical and reasonably affordable for large populations, its principal disadvantage is a possible rise in sample error, particularly in cases when the clusters are not internally diverse.
- Advanced type of cluster sampling, multi-stage sampling adds levels of sampling to control complicated population structures. A researcher investigating homes in a nation can initially choose provinces (stage one), then districts within those provinces (stage two), villages within those provinces (stage three), and lastly homes within those villages (stage four). Sampling might be done at every level randomly to preserve statistical rigor (Creswell and Clark, 2017). In national or international research where single-stage approaches are unfeasible, multi-stage sampling is very helpful. It strikes a mix of operational economy and representativeness.

3.2.2 Non-Probability Sampling Techniques

- Non-probability sampling techniques use the researcher's judgment, convenience, or another non-random factor driving unit selection instead of random selection (Bryman and Bell, 2015). The samples might not be population-representative and sampling error

cannot be calculated even though these methods are sometimes less costly, less complex, and faster to implement. Consequently, generalization of results is restricted. Common non-probabilities consist in: Based on choosing people who are easily available and eager to participate, convenience sampling is maybe the simplest non-probability technique. For instance, a researcher might poll people walking by a retail center or kids in a classroom. Although convenience sampling is cheap and rapid, since the sample may not be entirely representative of the population at large, it is prone to great degrees of bias (Saunders et al., 2009). Results derived from such samples should thus be taken under great care.

- Purposive Sampling, sometimes known as judgmental sampling, is the process by which a researcher purposefully chooses subjects thought to be best informed or pertinent to the study topic (Kothari, 2004). Particularly in case studies, expert interviews, or when looking for in-depth knowledge from certain groups, this method is often utilized in qualitative research. Purposive sampling is strong in that it can produce rich, comprehensive insights; but it also runs the danger of selection bias and lacks generalizability.
- Researching hard-to-reach or hidden populations, like members of stigmatized communities or specialists in niche sectors, Snowball Sampling is very helpful. The process starts with a small number of candidates who fit the requirements being asked to recommend others from their network (Bryman and Bell, 2015). Trust may be developed and closed groups broken through using this chain-referral approach. It might, however, also produce a sample more homogeneous than the target population, therefore restricting the variety of points of view.
- At last, Quota Sampling has elements in common with stratified sampling in that it starts by separating the population into several subgroups depending on important criteria. But rather than random selection, people are chosen using non-random techniques—typically convenience or purposive sampling—until a preset quota for every grouping is filled (Saunders et al., 2009). In public opinion polls and market research where time and resources are constrained, quota sampling is sometimes used. Although it seeks to mirror the characteristics of the population and thereby approximate representativeness, absence of randomization might nevertheless bring bias.

Chosen Sampling Method

The study's target audience consists of Indian startups—that is, businesses less than ten years old, formed and run out of India, and with an eye toward creative ideas or goods. Often displaying dynamic organizational structures, fast changing workplace cultures, and a strong orientation toward core values as part of their identity are these startups. The study especially targets those in leadership roles—such as founders, co-founders, CXOs, or heads of human resources or organizational culture—who actively help to shape and implant these fundamental values into daily operations.

Purposive sampling is used in the research to choose subjects who can offer insightful analysis of great depth. This qualitative sample technique lets the researcher purposefully select people with pertinent background in value integration and cultural development. A maximum variety sampling method is applied inside this purposive framework to guarantee variance across sectors, phases of development, and organizational sizes. This guarantees a comprehensive and sophisticated knowledge of the ways in which several startups use and absorb their ideals. Startups from many sectors, including FinTech, EdTech, HealthTech, AgriTech, SaaS, and e-commerce, will be included in the research so that sector-specific issues and practices may be found.

Additionally included in the sample will be startups in early-stage (0–3 years), growth-stage (3–7 years), and late-stage or pre-IPO (7–10 years). This diversity lets the research record how value integration changes as startups grow. Businesses of different sizes—from small teams of perhaps 10 people to bigger companies with up to 500 employees—will be included to evaluate how organizational scale affects communication of values and culture. Although startups might be scattered all throughout India, the emphasis will mostly be on those situated in major startup hotspots such as Bengaluru, Mumbai, Delhi NCR, Hyderabad, and Chennai, where diverse and dynamic innovation ecosystems are found.

Particularly in areas concerning human resources, corporate values, and organizational culture, participants will be chosen depending on their present leadership role and participation in strategic decision-making. To ensure the depth and variety of points of view, a total of 15 to 20 semi-structured interviews would be carried out attaining topic saturation. Depending on the participants' availability and convenience, interviews will last 45 to 60 minutes either in person or

remotely. Interviews will be audio-recorded and verbatim transcribed under permission for analysis. Regarding surveys, appropriate permission will be obtained prior to participant filling.

3.3 Data Collection

Data collecting—the methodical gathering of information from multiple sources to address research questions and achieve study objectives—is a critical stage in every research endeavor (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). The choice of the data gathering method depends much on the research challenge, the questions being asked, the kind of the phenomenon under investigation, and the available instruments for the researcher. A well-considered data collection plan ensures the acquisition of relevant, dependable, and legitimate data, which creates the foundation for further analysis and the generation of major outcomes (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). Data collecting methods can be categorized as main and secondary methods with different instruments, advantages, and disadvantages.

3.3.1 Primary Data Collection

Original data collected firsthand by the researcher—that is primary data (Hox and Boeijs, 2005) expressly for the present study. For the research, this type of data is unique since it comes directly from the source and provides current, context-specific information. By means of the collection of primary data, researchers can personalize their investigations to the goals of their study, therefore assuring the direct relevance of the gathered material to the research questions. Many methods of primary data collecting are used, each suitable for different study objectives and approaches.

Usually requiring the delivery of questionnaires to a sample of respondents, the survey method is one of the most regularly used main data collecting procedures. Closed-ended questions give predetermined response categories; semi-structured, combining closed-ended and open-ended questions; or unstructured, usually including open-ended questions leading to free-form responses (Babbie, 2020). Large population data collecting makes surveys extremely useful since they allow quantitative examination of attitudes, views, behaviors, and demographic traits. Every one of the several approaches they could be given—face-to--face interviews, mail, phone, or internet platforms—has expenses, reach, and response rate implications (De Vaus and De Vaus, 2013). Response bias, respondent weariness, and the likelihood of superficiality should not be well

planned even if polls offer benefits including uniformity and simplicity of analysis for quantitative data.

An interview is another crucial way for the researcher to directly contact the participant in order to obtain main data. From very organized, in which questions are set and asked in a certain order, to semi-structured, in which a guide of topics and questions is utilized but allows for flexibility and probing, to unstructured or in-depth interviews, more conversational and exploratory (Brinkman and Kvale, 2014). Semi-structured interviews are very helpful in qualitative research since they let the researcher get rich, deep insights, study challenging topics, and understand participants' points of view, experiences, and motives in their own words. Interviews conducted in each mode—face-to--face, over the phone, or via video conference—can be done with varied degrees of rapport-building and logistical ease (Silverman, 2021). Strong in their ability to generate in-depth information and clear uncertainty, interviews may also be time-consuming, resource-intensive, and prone to interviewer bias if not done carefully.

Another primary approach of acquiring data for studies is observations, in which case researchers meticulously monitor and record events or behaviors in either natural surroundings or a controlled environment. This method can provide direct insight on interactions and activities participants might not fairly record (Patton, 2014). Focus groups consist in helping a small group of participants to study their shared thoughts and experiences on a specified issue using group dynamics, therefore generating several points of view (Morgan, 1997). Commonly employed in both natural and social sciences, experiments let one or more factors be controlled to determine their influence on an outcome variable, therefore allowing the investigation of cause-and-effect relationships (Anderson-Cook, 2005).

3.3.2 Secondary Data Collection

Information already acquired by someone else for another use than the current research effort is known as secondary data (Bryman, 2016). This type of data can be obtained from a wide range of current materials by means of published sources like academic journals, books, government reports (e.g., census data, economic surveys), industrial publications, and organizational records (e.g., annual reports). Additional valuable secondary data comes from

unpublished sources including internal corporate records, archive materials, and publicly available databases (e.g., financial databases, survey archives) (Stewart and Shamdasani, 2014).

Using secondary data has various advantages including cost-effectiveness and time efficiency since the data is already available and does not call for the resource-intensive procedure of main data collecting. It can provide access to large, longitudinal databases that might be unaffordable for one researcher to compile. Moreover, secondary data can be used for contextualizing primary conclusions, comparative study, and trend identification throughout time (Smith, 2008). Researchers must carefully evaluate secondary data for its relevance, accuracy, reliability, timeliness, and possible biases even if it was previously acquired for different purposes and might not completely fit with the present study aims (Boslaugh, 2007).

Chosen Data Collection Method

This study uses a qualitative data collecting method using both primary and secondary data sources to investigate how Indian entrepreneurs embed and cascade their basic beliefs into their corporate culture. Targeting important organizational leaders directly engaged in forming and fostering corporate culture, the main data is gathered by semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. Since they enable in-depth investigation of the leaders' experiences, perspectives, and practices on the communication and integration of corporate values, semi-structured interviews are especially fit for this research. These flexible interviews let participants discuss procedures, cultural norms, and actual events inside their companies.

The survey element captures more general trends and viewpoints about value implementation among different companies, therefore complementing the interviews. Aiming at understanding how values are developed, shared, and practiced at various levels of the company, it comprises closed and open-ended questions. Developed depending on the research goals, both tools—the survey questionnaire and the interview guide—are tested to guarantee relevance and clarity. Every participant provides consent; depending on availability, interviews are done either in-person or by video conference. Every interview runs 45 to 60 minutes and is audio-recorded with permission. The recordings are next verbatim transcribed for thematic analysis.

Apart from main data, the research gathers secondary data from internal firm records as well as publicly accessible ones including mission statements, value statements, internal

newsletters, and correspondence materials. It also includes pertinent industry papers, news releases, and media pieces offering context to the Indian startup scene. Triangulating data, enhancing the validity of the results, and spotting consistency or disparities between what is reported publicly and carried out within depend on these sources.

This multi-source data collecting approach guarantees a thorough awareness of the value cascade and the evolution of organizational culture inside Indian companies taken together. The study offers a deep, complex view of how values impact organizational behavior and identity in the dynamic startup environment by including both the stated and actual aspects of corporate values.

3.4 Data Analysis Techniques

Data must be carefully prepared to guarantee authenticity and dependability of the conclusions before the official process of data analysis starts. Whether qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods, any research approach depends on this preparatory phase since it protects the integrity and credibility of the subsequent analysis. This preparation stage of quantitative research consists in important chores including data organizing, coding, and data cleansing. Usually in spreadsheets or statistical tools like SPSS or R, organizing data means clearly and easily accessible formatting of information. In quantitative settings, coding is the process of turning unprocessed data—such as survey answers—into numerical values fit for statistical analysis. Still, the process of data cleansing is considerably more complex and exacting. It calls for spotting and managing missing values, which, left unaddressed, can skew findings or lower the study's statistical power. Furthermore, researchers have to look for anomalies in the dataset since they can greatly affect statistical computations including the mean and regression coefficients. These deviations could point to data input mistakes or unusual circumstances requiring different treatment. Often, changes—such as standardization or normalization—are also required to satisfy the presumptions needed for statistical tests (Field, 2024). Producing accurate findings that reflect the actual features of the data and prevent prejudices resulting from inadequate data quality depends on all these stages.

Data preparation in qualitative research refers to a somewhat different but equally demanding set of tasks meant to enable thorough immersion into the textual or observational data.

Usually beginning with the arrangement of field notes—which could include observations, comments, and contextual information gathered throughout the research—this procedure consists in These notes must be arranged such that they are meaningful and easily available for more study. Transposing interviews, focus group talks, or audio recordings into written form is among the most important chores in qualitative preparation. Transcription is an interpretive act demanding accuracy and sensitivity to linguistic complexity, tone, pauses, and emotions communicated by participants, not only a clerical chore. This stage is essential for researchers to start really and truly interacting with the data, claims Creswell and Poth (2016). It prepares the ground for immersion, in which case researchers start to absorb the stories, settings, and meanings expressed in the participants' answers.

Researchers in both paradigms do a preliminary or first familiarization with their datasets after the organizational stage. In quantitative research, this entails creating and analyzing descriptive statistics including the mean, median, standard deviation, and frequency distributions to grasp the overall tendencies and variability in the data (Pallant, 2020). These descriptive instruments give researchers an initial view of the structure of the dataset and enable them to decide which further inferential tests to use based on that. In qualitative research, this stage consists of open-ended reading and memoing—a technique by which researchers write down first impressions, noticeable patterns, and analytic questions as they go over transcripts or field notes (Saldana, 2021). This stage enables the identification of new ideas or themes that might direct the creation of theoretical lenses or coding frameworks for more in-depth study. Memo also acts as a reflective tool tracking the changing knowledge and interpretations of the researcher, thereby improving the analytical depth and transparency.

Any research project depends on meticulous data preparation; it is not a peripheral chore. It provides the foundation upon which all later study is constructed. This stage guarantees that the data is reliable and analytically rich whether through cleaning numerical data, transcribing rich narratives, or doing initial analysis to become familiar. When done properly, it enables researchers to approach their formal analysis with confidence knowing that the data has been carefully selected and is ready to produce accurate, significant findings.

3.4.1 Qualitative Data Analysis Techniques

Fundamentally, qualitative data analysis is about deciphering non-numerical data—that is, words, expressions, observations, and stories—to expose meanings, patterns, and lived experiences as perceived by participants. It demands close interaction with the facts, transcending simple surface description to understand the underlying meaning of what is stated and how it is said. Content Analysis is among the most often employed techniques as it lets researchers methodically arrange, classify, and analyze textual content by means of topic, pattern, or concept identification within the data (Krippendorff, 2018). Braun and Clarke's (2006) another well-known approach, Thematic Analysis, helps researchers identify recurrent themes or concepts across the dataset, therefore capturing both implicit and explicit meanings. Fairclough (1992) describes Discourse Analysis, which explores how power dynamics, ideas, and social conventions are ingrained in daily speech and so reflects rather than creates social reality. By emphasizing how people organize their experiences into coherent stories, so providing insights on identity, temporality, and personal meaning-making, narrative analysis extends the interpretive terrain even more (Riessman, 2008).

Grounded Theory is another strong method that uses an iterative, inductive data collecting and coding procedure to create theory straight from the data itself rather than testing a priori hypotheses (Charmaz, 2014). Analogous to this, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) emphasizes the subjective interpretations people attach to certain events or phenomena, therefore highlighting the complex knowledge of participants lived experiences (Smith et al., 2014). Researchers routinely use triangulation, member checking, and audit trails (Miles and Jozefowicz-Simbeni, 2010) to guarantee the rigor and integrity of qualitative results. These techniques not only confirm the validity of the data but also improve the trustworthiness of interpretations, therefore promoting a methodologically sound and ethically strong research process.

3.4.2 Quantitative Data Analysis Techniques

Aiming to test hypotheses, find patterns, and generate generalizable conclusions from structured information, quantitative data analysis centers on numerical precision and statistical logic. Often the initial stage in this procedure is the application of descriptive statistics, which help to clearly explain the major characteristics of a dataset. Measures include the mean, median, mode, standard deviation, and frequency distributions provide important new perspectives on the

central tendency, variability, and general form of the data (Pallant, 2020). Before moving on to more advanced study, these fundamental but vital instruments enable researchers to grasp the structure of the dataset. Turning now to inferential statistics, researchers draw conclusions about populations based on sample data by means of both parametric tests—such as t-tests, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), and linear regression—and non-parametric tests—such as the chi-square test and Mann-Whitney U test (Hanvey, 2018).

Important for this process are statistical instruments that let scientists ascertain the strength and importance of correlations. While confidence intervals give a range within which the actual population parameter is predicted to lie, P-values assist in determining if the results are probably due to chance. Moreover, effect sizes (Cohen, 2013) provide information on the pragmatic relevance of results, therefore enabling researchers to go beyond statistical relevance to grasp actual impact. These instruments taken together guarantee strong, accurate, and significant data interpretation. Maintaining the scientific integrity of conclusions depends on constant careful attention to data assumptions, validity, and dependability.

3.4.3 Mixed Methods Data Analysis

Mixed methods research is a potent method that combines the qualities of both qualitative and quantitative paradigms to provide a more whole knowledge of difficult research issues. To further and widen the interpretation of outcomes, it entails gathering, evaluating, and combining numerical and narrative data inside one research project. Sequential exploratory design is one of the most often used techniques in which qualitative data collecting and analysis come before the quantitative phase. When investigating a rather unknown phenomena, this method is very helpful since the first qualitative results might guide the design of next studies or polls (Creswell and Clark, 2017). In the sequential explanatory design, on the other hand, quantitative results are gathered and examined first, then qualitative data is included to offer more background or justification for those conclusions.

Another often used technique is the convergent parallel design, in which qualitative and quantitative data are gathered concurrently but examined independently prior to being combined at the interpretation stage. This method guarantees that both kinds of data help equally to clarify the study subject. Conversely, the embedded design integrates one form of data within a study mostly driven by another: for instance, qualitative interviews included inside a more extensive

quantitative survey. These designs, according to Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009), provide more adaptability and flexibility in tackling several aspects of a study issue. Mixed methods research also improves triangulation by providing several prisms through which to validate results, therefore raising the credibility of the research. As Bryman (2006) points out, the mix of approaches offers a more complex, fuller picture of the research environment than either technique could accomplish on its own.

3.4.4 Software for Data Analysis

In modern research, the management and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data depend on the indispensable use of specialized software tools. Along with improving analysis accuracy and efficiency, these tools support a clear, methodical, replicable research approach. Software including SPSS, R, SAS, and Stata provides a broad spectrum of statistical methods ranging from simple descriptive statistics to sophisticated multivariate modeling (Field, 2024) for quantitative data. These systems let researchers get complex insights from big data by including built-in tools for data visualization, data cleansing, hypothesis testing, predictive analytics, and data visualization. Crucially for verifying statistical conclusions, they also help to compute inferential measures including p-values, confidence ranges, and regression coefficients.

Within qualitative analysis, instruments such as NVivo, ATLAS.ti, and MAXQDA offer strong settings for coding, theming, and displaying textual data. These systems let researchers interact with the data at both surface and interpretative levels by supporting activities including auto-coding, keyword searches, inter-coder reliability checks, and the building of thematic networks (Creswell and Poth, 2016). Furthermore, these instruments sometimes provide choices for including multimedia materials such photos, audio, and video, so enhancing the analytical process. Through methodical coding and retrieval, qualitative analysis tools help to build significant categories and themes from enormous story material. Crucially, both kinds of software help to guarantee analytical process transparency, so allowing researchers to record every stage of their work and so enable repeatability and peer review. These digital technologies become progressively more important in generating rigorous and respectable academic work as data complexity rises in contemporary research.

Chosen Data Analysis Technique

Thematic analysis has been chosen as the main data analysis method in line with the qualitative character of this study and its emphasis on knowledge of the integration of core values inside Indian companies. Examining how people experience, comprehend, and interpret social events—in this example, the way startup leaders view, share, and ingrain organizational principles into their cultures and practice is well suited for thematic study. This approach is perfect for achieving the main goals of the research since it provides the freedom and depth needed to investigate rich, extensive, and sophisticated qualitative data.

Three main areas—the need of including core values in Indian startups, the ways in which these values are shared and communicated across the company as it develops, and the impact of these values on organizational culture, employee behavior, and general performance—are sought to be investigated in this paper. By allowing the discovery of recurrent patterns, or themes, that show up from textual texts and interviews, topical analysis helps these goals. It helps participants to have a thorough awareness of their points of view and organizational strategies, revealing not only what is being done but also the reasons behind and methods of application of specific techniques.

Following Braun and Clarke (2006), the study will use a well-accepted six-phase methodology: familiarization with the data, generation of initial codes, topic search, theme definition and naming, and final report production. This methodical approach guarantees a rigorous and methodical study of the qualitative data, therefore improving the dependability and openness of the research results. Every interview transcript and pertinent documentation will be extensively examined and categorized into meaningful themes based on important ideas. These ideas will mirror fundamental findings about value identification, communication techniques, cultural integration, and startup perceived results.

Apart from theme analysis, the study will hardly make use of descriptive statistics obtained from the survey results. This will give simple summaries like percentages and frequencies, which could help the qualitative results have perspective. These numbers could show, for example, the frequency of communication channels used or the formal value statements of startups, therefore triangulating and supporting the themes found from the interview data.

Since it captures the depth and complexity of the social and organizational dynamics engaged in value integration, thematic analysis is the best suitable method for this research overall. When combined with descriptive data from polls, it enables a complete knowledge of how Indian entrepreneurs maintain and grow their basic values in changing organizational settings.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Any research involving human participants must first take ethical issues top priority; thus, this study has been meticulously planned to follow accepted ethical standards, including respect for persons, beneficence, and justice, as stated in the Belmont Report (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1978). Through addressing important issues such informed permission, confidentiality, data protection, and institutional compliance, this study guarantees ethical integrity.

First and most importantly, before any subjects engage in the study, informed permission will be obtained from each one. Every possible participant will receive a comprehensive information sheet covering the goal of the study, the methods used, the voluntary character of involvement, and their freedom to leave at any point free from penalty. This is consistent with the ethical recommendations put forward by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC, 2021) and the American Psychological Association (APA, 2020), which underline the need of getting informed and voluntary participation. Verbal permission will be recorded in cases of online interviews, therefore guaranteeing openness and mutual agreement. Before agreeing to take part, every participant will also be free to ask questions regarding the study.

Crucially for this research are also anonymity and confidentiality. All personally identifiable information will be deleted during the transcription process to safeguard participant privacy and identity. Every written report and publication will be published under pseudons. Where at least possible, data will be presented in aggregate form to help to prevent identification of individuals or their linked companies. This is consistent with the British Educational Research Association's (BERA, 2018) confidentiality principle, which holds that researchers must act in all required ways to guarantee that the material given by individuals stays anonymous and safe.

Moreover, local data protection rules as well as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR, EU 2016/679) will be followed in data protection actions. On encrypted and password-

protected devices will all digital files—including audio recordings, transcripts, survey data—stored. The main researcher will have exclusive access to this data. Separate storage of personal data and consent forms from the research data will help to prevent any direct connections. Following institutional data management practices, data will be kept for a designated period—usually one to two years—after the research is over, then safely erased.

Before starting data collecting, ethical clearance will also come from the related academic institution's Institutional Ethics Committee or Review Board. This approval will guarantee that every facet of the research, including the methodology, data handling practices, and consent systems, is closely examined and satisfies official ethical criteria. To keep ethical compliance, any changes made to the design or methods of the study during the research will be turned in for additional evaluation and approval.

The study also underlines respect of participants all through the research procedure. Questions asked in surveys and interviews will be meant to be sensitive to the professional background of the participants and non-invasive. Participants will have complete control over their degree of involvement and be urged not to respond to any questions they find awkward. Underlying most research ethics rules, this represents the respect for autonomy idea (Beauchamp and Childress, 1994).

Following these ethical guidelines and processes guarantees that participants' rights, dignity, and privacy are totally safeguarded in the research. In this regard, ethical rigor not only protects participant interests but also strengthens the credibility, dependability, and social worth of the research results.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

Demographic analysis

The data and information collected to complete the study were obtained through a questionnaire and other sources. Considering the role in the company, most respondents, i.e., 49.7% hold senior management positions. 27.7% are Founder/CEO/CXO. Further, 22.6% worked in a middle management position. Taking into consideration, size of the organisation, many respondents, i.e., 45.2% have 500+ employees in their organisation. 20% worked in a medium-sized organisation with 50–100 employees. 18% of respondents worked in an organisation with fewer than 50 employees. Furthermore, considering the operations of organisations, most responses, i.e., 63.9% of organisations, have operated for more than 5 years, 19.4% organisations operated for 1-3years. 10.3% of organisations operated for less than 1 year. Taking into consideration, experience of respondents, many responses, i.e., 31.6% were working from 1 to 3 years in the organisation. 30.3% of respondents had worked in the organisation for more than 5 years. 21.9% response, worked from 3 to 5 years.

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics indicate that employees rate the communication, clarity, integration, and monitoring of the company value statements as generally weak to moderate, with most of the mean scores falling below the midpoint on the 5-point scale. This implies that, although there are values present, and they are communicated to some degree, they are yet to be deeply institutionalised into day-to-day organisational lives and performance practices.

Communication and clarity of value statements: Frequency of communication has the highest means of 2.77, but below 3. These highlighted values are communicated occasionally and consistently or strongly. The means of clarity and understanding of value statements is 2.44, which indicates that the values are not very clear and understandable to the employees, but they are to some extent. Value statements are relatively unavailable (mean 1.98) to be referred to, which means that the employees cannot find the values easily and refer to them when the need arises. Combined, it means that the organisation communicates about values here and there, but it does

not seem clear enough or prominent or accessible enough to the employees, which may undermine their practical effectiveness.

Integration into onboarding, routines, and activities: - Onboarding values-based inclusion has a mean value of 2.39, which implies low integration of values in new employees' induction processes. The addition of values to daily working practices and routines (mean 2.59) and team building activities (mean 2.65) is a little bigger but not yet at an acceptable level. The degree of informal communication of values via discussion with colleagues or managers (2.58 mean) is moderate, which indicates that not strongly, some value-related discussions are held informally. Such a trend indicates that the use of formal structures (onboarding, routines, team building) is not utilised to the fullest to instill values, although some informal reinforcement is present.

Alignment, belief, and cultural impact: - The mean of alignment of value statements with organisational goals is 2.25, which shows that the employees are not firmly persuaded that the values are strategically aligned. The degree to which the values are believed in and followed by the employees has a mean of 2.26, which is not very high in terms of internalisation of values. There is also a poorly perceived contribution of a good organisational culture by values (mean 2.19). These findings indicate that the workers perceive the value statements as somewhat of a symbol and not of guiding behaviour and their impact on culture and individual commitment is largely not great.

Impact on performance and team outcomes: - The mean effect of value communication on the performance of employees is 2.30. The value statements have one of the lowest means of contribution to team performance, which is 2.17. It means that the employees do not really feel a direct correlation between values and performance results, at the individual or team level. Values are not yet regarded as a force of effectiveness or productivity.

Leadership role: - The degree of leadership and management imitating the values has a mean of 2.33. Follow-through on values (mean 2.55) and the efficiency of follow-through procedures (mean 2.46) are also somewhat higher but still under the centre. The meaning of feedback on value adherence is 2.32, which means that there is not much feedback, and it is irregular. This implies that leadership is not a well-perceived role-modelling the values, and although there are some monitoring, feedback mechanisms and consequences are associated with

the values are weak. Values are still more of a paper talk unless there is a good example of leadership and a walkthrough.

Variability in responses and distribution: - The standard deviations vary between 0.8 and 1.3, mostly a good indication that there was average variability in responses. Value-related practices are rated better by some employees, whereas others are very negative. The values of skew are mostly positive (almost 0.2-0.8), which means that the tendency to lower scores is observed, and more respondents will choose the negative or lower-frequency response. Values of negative kurtosis between -0.3 and -0.9 indicate flat distributions, which indicate the variety of opinions and not a high degree of consensus.

Chi square analysis: In many cases the expected counts are less than 5 but the p value is significant. Thus, these are exploratory results, and the interpretation needs to be done with extra caution.

What is your role in the company? * How clear and understandable are the company's value statements to employees?

Table 1

Employee Role and Perception of Organizational Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.356 ^a	8	.241
Likelihood Ratio	10.774	8	.215
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 4 cells (26.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.58.

The chi-square test indicates that the two categorical variables are not associated at a statistically significant level.

Pearson Chi-Square = 10.356, and the df of the test = 8 and $p = 0.241$, and this is less than 0.05. This means that you do not accept a null hypothesis. In other words, the tests of the significant relationship between the variables do not exhibit any evidence. The likelihood ratio ($\chi^2 = 10.774$, $p = 0.215$) can also be used to draw the same conclusion. This is a good sample size of 155 valid cases. However, 4 (26.7) cells have the expected value at less than 5, with the lowest of 1.58. This slightly violates the assumption of chi-square, and therefore, the results should be approached with a certain degree of caution.

What is your role in the company? * How accessible are the company's value statements for reference when needed?

Table 2.

Employee Role and Accessibility of Company Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.979 ^a	6	.547
Likelihood Ratio	4.854	6	.563
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 3 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.26.

The Pearson Chi-Square value is 4.979 with 6 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.547. The null hypothesis is not rejected as p is greater than 0.05, and this implies that there is no significant correlation between the variables in a sample composed of 155 respondents. The same can be confirmed by the Likelihood Ratio ($\chi^2 = 4.854$, $p = 0.563$). It should be noted that there are 3 cells (25%), which have expected counts below five, and the expected count of 2.26 is the minimum expected count. This undermines the strength of the test a little, and the results can be interpreted cautiously, but they do indicate, in general, the absence of any significant correlation.

*What is your role in the company? * How clear and understandable are the company's value statements to employees?*

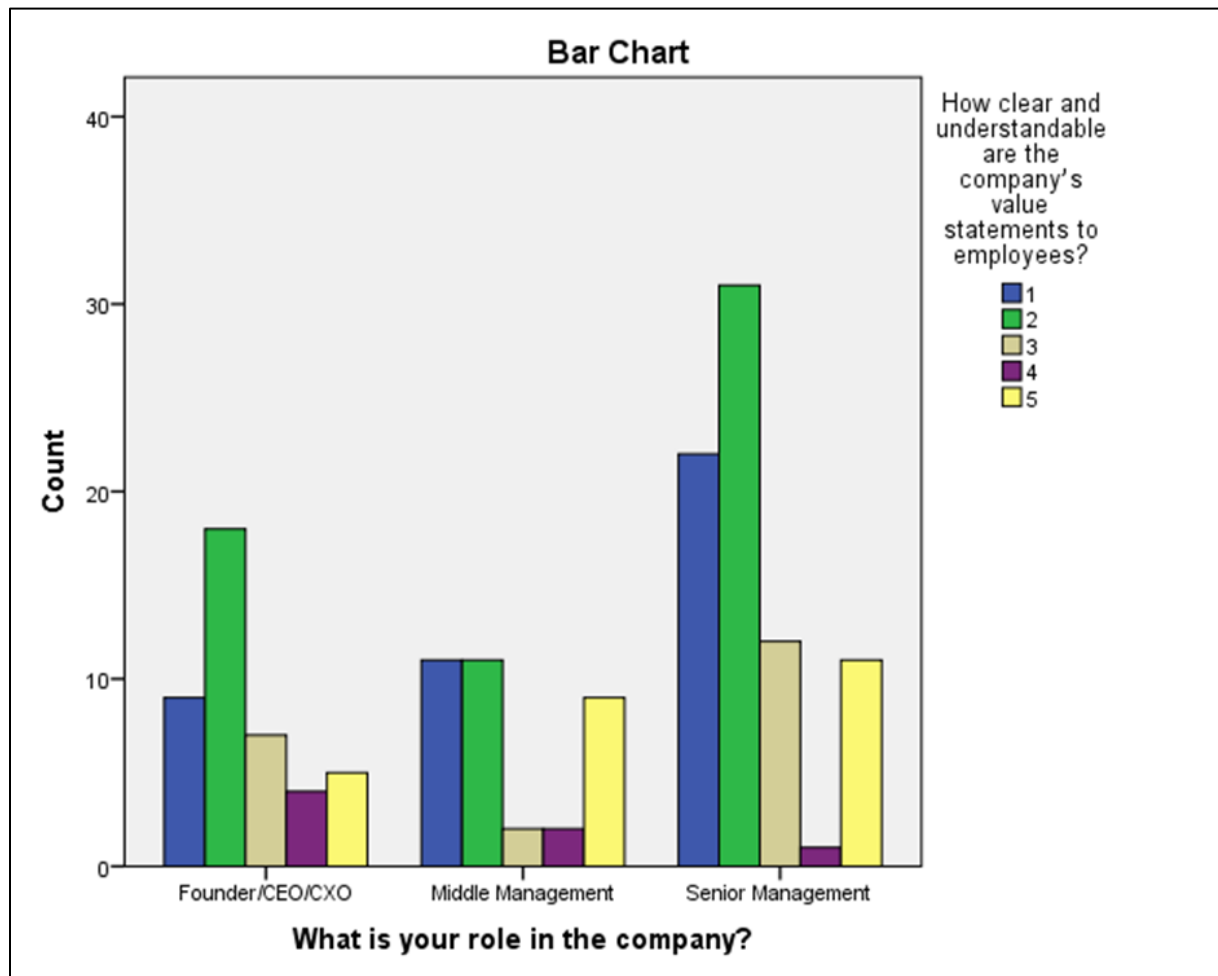


Figure 2

Employee's Role in the company

The above bar chart states that the highest number of respondents is senior management. The Founder/CEO/CXO is also highly rated, with a rating of 2, and there are a few high scores. Middle management has a slightly higher score, with a clear category of 4 and 5 ratings; however, negative and neutral attitudes still prevail in all positions within the organization.

What is your role in the company? * How much do employees believe in and live up to the corporate value statements?

Table 3.

Employee Role and Alignment with Corporate Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.753 ^a	6	.451
Likelihood Ratio	5.677	6	.460
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 2 cells (16.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.71.

The Pearson Chi-Square = $\chi^2(6) = 5.753$ with $p = 0.451$ is greater than the standard significance value of 0.05. This implies that you do not reject the null hypothesis, and therefore, the distribution of responses in categories will not be significantly different between the groups under comparison. The sample size used is sufficient ($N = 155$). The expected count of only 2 cells (16.7) is below the standardised limit (not exceeding 20%), so the test results are statistically good, with a slight degree of caution.

What is the size of your organization? * How clear and understandable are the company's value statements to employees?

Table 4

Organizational Size and Clarity of Company Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	30.707 ^a	12	.002
Likelihood Ratio	30.116	12	.003
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 9 cells (45.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.17.

The value of Pearson Chi-Square = 30.707 and the df = 12, and $p = 0.002$ are lower than 0.05. This implies that considered null hypothesis of no relation is considered, and thus, find that the variables are not independent. The Likelihood Ratio ($p = 0.003$) confirms the same conclusion. But the number of cells expected is less than 5 (minimum 1.17) in 45% of cells, which is a breach of the chi-square. Therefore, the result can be taken at face value, but it can be considered with a certain amount of reservation, and other approaches (e.g. by combining categories or an exact test) would be better.

What is the size of your organization? * How accessible are the company's value statements for reference when needed?

Table 5

Organizational Size and Accessibility of Company Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.077 ^a	9	.344
Likelihood Ratio	11.890	9	.220
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 6 cells (37.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.68.

The chi-square test indicates $\chi^2(9) = 10.077$, $p = 0.344$, which exceeds 0.05. This implies that the two categorical variables under test are statistically not associated, so the null hypothesis is not rejected. The result of the likelihood ratio justifies the same. Nonetheless, approximately 37.5 per cent of the cells have the expected counts below 5, and the expected count of 1.68 is the minimum expected count, which is inconsistent with a fundamental assumption of the chi-square test. This diminishes the validity and strength of the results; hence, the data is to be taken at face value and preferably validated with a bigger sample size or categorization.

What is the size of your organization? * How well do the company's value statements align with your organizational goals?

Table 6

Organizational Size and Alignment of Company Value Statements with Organizational Goals

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	34.660 ^a	12	.001
Likelihood Ratio	32.126	12	.001
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 10 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.51.

The chi-square test indicates that there is a significant relationship between the two categorical variables (Pearson 34.660, 12, $p = .001$). The null hypothesis is rejected because the p-value is less than 0.05, which means that the responses are not distributed independently across the categories. Nonetheless, 10 cells (50) are expected to have less than 5 expected counts, and the expected minimum count is 1.51, which is not typical of chi-square assumptions. This lowers the accuracy of the finding. Thus, the results are to be treated with caution, and it is advisable to combine categories or apply another test.

What is the size of your organization? * How much do employees believe in and live up to the corporate value statements?

Table 7

Organizational Size and Employee Alignment with Corporate Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	25.312 ^a	9	.003
Likelihood Ratio	26.704	9	.002
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 5 cells (31.2%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.01.

Pearson Chi-Square value is 25.312 with 9 degrees of freedom and p-value of 0.003, which is less than the 0.05 mark. This implies that the null hypothesis of no relationship (independence) has been rejected, indicating that the distribution of responses among the categories is neither arbitrary nor dependent on the other variable. This conclusion is supported by the Likelihood Ratio test ($\chi^2 = 26.704$, $p = 0.002$). Nevertheless, approximately 31.2% of cells have anticipated counts less than 5; thus, with some care should be interpreted with caution, and merging of categories might be recommended.

*How long has your organization been operating? * How clear and understandable are the company's value statements to employees?*

Table 8

Organizational Age and Clarity of Company Value Statement

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	35.054 ^a	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	30.330	12	.002
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 13 cells (65.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .45.

Pearson Chi-square is 35.054 with 12 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. This implies that the distribution of responses as observed is not like what would have been obtained through chance, thus the null hypothesis of no relation is rejected. Nonetheless, 65 per cent of the cells have an expected count that is less than 5, where the minimum expected count is 0.45. This is a breach of the assumptions of the chi-square test, and hence, the results should be taken with serious consideration, and category regrouping or alternative tests can be used.

How long has your organization been operating? * How accessible are the company's value statements for reference when needed?

Table 9

Organizational Age and Accessibility of Company Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.348 ^a	9	.110
Likelihood Ratio	15.540	9	.077
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 7 cells (43.8%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .65.

The Pearson Chi-square value of the Chi-square test is 14.348 (df = 9, p = 0.110). The p-value is bigger than 0.05, and hence there is no statistically significant relationship between the two categorical variables. This outcome (p = 0.077) is justified by the Likelihood Ratio test (it is also higher than the standard level of significance). Nevertheless, 7 cells (43.8%) are expected to be less than 5 in number, and the lowest of expected cells is 0.65. It breaks the common hypothesis of Chi-square tests, and the findings must be taken with care, and grouping of categories or a greater number of them may be necessary.

How long has your organization been operating? * How well do the company's value statements align with your organizational goals?

Table 10

Organizational Age and Alignment of Company Value Statements with Organizational Goals

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	40.277 ^a	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	36.639	12	.000
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 11 cells (55.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .58.

The analysis of the chi-square test shows that the two categorical variables under study are statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 40.277$, $df = 12$, $p = 0.001$). This implies that the distribution of responses that have been observed is not very similar to the distribution of responses that would have been had there been no relationship among the variables. This conclusion is supported by a similar level of significance of the likelihood ratio test. The test assumptions are, however, somewhat not met because 55 percent of the cells have expected counts less than 5 and the lowest expected count is 0.58. Hence, the results cannot be treated with much care, and it is better to re-group categories or take other tests.

How long has your organization been operating? * How much do employees believe in and live up to the corporate value statements?

Table 11

Organizational Age and Employee Alignment with Corporate Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	36.128 ^a	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	36.002	9	.000
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 8 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .77.

The chi-square findings show that the two categorical variables under test are statistically significant. The Pearson Chi-Square test value of 36.128 has 9 degrees of freedom and p-value of 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. This implies that the null hypothesis of no relationship is rejected, which implies that the distribution of responses varies across categories. These findings should however be interpreted with caution since half of the cells are expected to have less than five counts and minimum expected counts are 0.77, which are not valid when assuming chi-square and can decrease the test reliability.

What is your role in the company? * How often does your company communicate its value to staff members?

Table 12

Employee Role and Frequency of Communication of Company Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.042 ^a	8	.932
Likelihood Ratio	3.191	8	.922
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 2 cells (13.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.61.

The chi-square findings reveal that the categorical variables do not have a statistically significant relationship. The Pearson Chi-Square = 3.042 with 8 degrees of freedom and a p-value = 0.932 which is way higher than the level of 0.05 significance. The null hypothesis of independence is therefore kept indicating that distribution of responses in categories is mainly as it is expected. The test results are deemed to be reliable as only 13.3% of the cells contain counts that are below 5, which is acceptable.

What is your role in the company? * Which channels are most used to communicate the company's Value statements? (Select all that apply)

Table 13

Employee Role and Channels Used for Communicating Company Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	81.288 ^a	72	.212
Likelihood Ratio	92.448	72	.053
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 106 cells (95.5%) have expected count less than 5.

The minimum expected count is .23.

The p-value of Pearson Chi-Square is 81.288 with 72 d.o.f. = 0.212, which is more than the p-value of 0.05. This shows that there is no statistically significant correlation between the variables and hence the null hypothesis of no association is not rejected. On the Likelihood Ratio test ($p = 0.053$), the value is nearer to 0.05 than significant. Nonetheless, the chi-square test assumptions are grossly compromised, with more than 95.5% of the cells having an expected value that is below 5. This proves the results ineffective, and analysis would preferably be redone by grouping categories or conducting a different statistical test.

What is your role in the company? * How effectively are the value statements included in new employee onboarding processes?

Table 14

Employee Role and Effectiveness of Value Statement Integration in Onboarding Processes

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.120 ^a	8	.745
Likelihood Ratio	4.841	8	.774
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 5 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.03.

The chi-square test presents a Pearson Chi-Square value of 5.120 with 8 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.745 which is significantly more than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between the variables is accepted. This implies that the categories do not play a major role in the distribution of the responses. Nevertheless, approximately one-third of the cells are expected to count less than 5 and this means that the assumptions of the test are partially broken, and the results are to be regarded with some caution.

What is your role in the company? * How frequently are value statements incorporated into team-building activities?

Table 15

Employee Role and Frequency of Incorporation of Value Statements in Team-Building Activities

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.515 ^a	8	.590
Likelihood Ratio	6.825	8	.556
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 5 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.58.

The chi-square test ($\chi^2 = 6.515$, 8, $p = .590$) does not demonstrate any statistically significant relationship between the two variables because the p-value is above 0.05. That is why the null hypothesis of no relationship is accepted. This implies that the observed disparities in the frequencies in the observed categories may have been caused by chance. Nonetheless, the expectations of the counts of the cells below 5 are 33.3 percent, therefore, the test assumptions are not entirely satisfied, and the findings should be regarded with some degree of caution.

What is your role in the company? * How well do leadership and management exemplify the company's value statements in their actions?

Table 16

Employee Role and Leadership Alignment with Company Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.564 ^a	8	.894
Likelihood Ratio	3.432	8	.904
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 4 cells (26.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.13.

The results of the chi-square test (Pearson $\chi^2 = 3.564$, $df = 8$, $p = 0.894$) indicate that at the 5 percent level there is no statistically significant relationship between the two categorical variables. The p-value is very large (the p-value is much more than 0.05), so the null hypothesis of independence is accepted, meaning the responses are distributed similarly in groups. Despite the fact that, on the work of 26.7% of the cells, the count is below 5, which has a slight impact on the robustness, the test, in general, tends to indicate that there is no significant relationship in this sample of 155 cases.

What is the size of your organization? * How often does your company communicate its values to staff members?

Table 17

Organizational Size and Frequency of Communication of Company Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.617 ^a	12	.263
Likelihood Ratio	15.445	12	.218
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 5 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.68.

The Pearson Chi-Square test value is 14.617 with a degree of freedom of 12 and a p-value of 0.263, which is not less than the p-value of 0.05. Consequently, the null hypothesis of no difference is accepted, indicating that the differences made by categories are probably accidental. Nevertheless, the percentage of the cells with anticipated counts less than 5 is approximately 25 percent, hence the results must be taken with a certain caution as concerns the test assumptions.

What is the size of your organization? * Which channels are most used to communicate the company's Value statements? (Select all that apply)

Table 18

Organizational Size and Channels Used for Communicating Company Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	124.667 ^a	108	.130
Likelihood Ratio	135.189	108	.039
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 145 cells (98.0%) have expected count less than 5.

The minimum expected count is .17.

The Chi-Square of 124.667 and degrees of freedom of 108 with a p-value of 0.130 do not show any statistically significant relationship between the two variables at the 5% level, and therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected. The likelihood ratio is significant ($p = 0.039$), but the assumptions of the test are seriously compromised since 98% of the cells are expected to have a count of less than 5. This renders the results inaccurate, and the table needs to be slimmed down, or the sample size ought to be raised prior to coming up with solid conclusions.

What is the size of your organization? * What challenges do managers face in cascading the value statements to their teams?

Table 19

Organizational Size and Managerial Challenges in Cascading Company Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	91.994 ^a	99	.678
Likelihood Ratio	92.752	99	.658
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 127 cells (93.4%) have expected count less than 5.

The minimum expected count is .17.

The chi-square findings (Pearson $\chi^2 = 91.994$, $df = 99$, $p = 0.678$) show that the variables do not have a statistically significant relationship at the 5% level. So the null hypothesis of independence is not rejected. Nonetheless, the test assumptions are considerably broken, since many of the cells (93.4 percent) have an expected count of less than 5, and the lowest expected count is very low (0.17). This undermines the accuracy of the finding, and the results must be viewed with caution and regrouping of categories might be necessary.

What is the size of your organization? * How effectively are the value statements included in new employee onboarding processes?

Table 20

Organizational Size and Effectiveness of Value Statement Integration in Onboarding Processes

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	34.370 ^a	12	.001
Likelihood Ratio	30.257	12	.003
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 7 cells (35.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.51.

The chi-square test does indicate significant association of the variables (Pearson $\chi^2 = 34.37$, $df = 12$, $p = 0.001$), and thus the null hypothesis of no relationship is rejected at 5 per cent. This implies that the distribution of the responses is not meaningless among the categories. Nevertheless, the expected counts of approximately 35% of the cells are less than 5 (minimum 1.51), which is a violation of the assumptions of chi-square. Thus, these findings are to be considered carefully, and category regrouping or another test can be considered.

What is the size of your organization? * How frequently are value statements incorporated into team-building activities?

Table 21

Organizational Size and Frequency of Value Statement Integration in Team-Building Activities

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.437 ^a	12	.172
Likelihood Ratio	17.902	12	.119
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 10 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.68.

A Pearson Chi-Square value is 16.437 and the degree of freedom is 12 with a p-value of 0.172 (> 0.05) which means that the two variables do not have a statistically significant association. The same can be identified with respect to the likelihood ratio test. But half of the total cells are not counted as anticipated more than 5 with minimum count as 1.68, a fact that does not meet the chi squared assumption.

What is the size of your organization? * How well do leadership and management exemplify the company's value statements in their actions?

Table 22

Organizational Size and Leadership Alignment with Company Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	22.075 ^a	12	.037
Likelihood Ratio	22.307	12	.034
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 7 cells (35.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .84.

According to the chi-square test, the Pearson Chi-Square is 22.075 with 12 degrees of freedom and significance level of 0.037. The association between the two categorical variables is statistically significant as p is below 0.05. The assumption of the chi-square test is, however, somewhat not fulfilled as 35% of the cells have expected count of less than 5 with a minimum of the count of expectation being less than 0.84.

How long has your organization been operating? * How often does your company communicate its value to staff members?

Table 23

Organizational Age and Frequency of Communication of Company Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	20.452 ^a	12	.059
Likelihood Ratio	22.116	12	.036
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 11 cells (55.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.03.

The Pearson Chi-Square ($\chi^2 = 20.452$, $df = 12$, $p = 0.059$) value shows that the relationship between the variables is not significant at the 5 percent mark, but it is close. There is a potential significant association of the Likelihood Ratio ($p = 0.036$) but one should take the results with cautiousness. As 55 percent of the cells are likely to have a count of less than 5 (minimum of 1.03), the Chi-square test condition is not met, making the findings less reliable.

*How long has your organization been operating? * Which channels are most used to communicate the company's Value statements? (Select all that apply)*

Table 24

Organizational Age and Channels Used for Communicating Company Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	81.661 ^a	108	.972
Likelihood Ratio	91.775	108	.868
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 142 cells (95.9%) have expected count less than 5.

The minimum expected count is .06.

The chi-square test indicates that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 81.661 at 108 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.972 which is far more than 0.05. This shows that there is no statistically significant relation between the variables, hence the null hypothesis of independence is accepted. The applicability of this finding is however compromised by the fact that 142 cells (95.9) have an expected value that is less than 5, which is way above the acceptable threshold.

How long has your organization been operating? * What challenges do managers face in cascading the value statements to their teams?

Table 25

Organizational Age and Managerial Challenges in Cascading Company Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	68.250 ^a	99	.992
Likelihood Ratio	69.317	99	.990
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 129 cells (94.9%) have expected count less than 5.

The minimum expected count is .06.

The chi-square test indicates no statistically significant relationship between the variables (Pearson $\chi^2 = 68.250$, $df = 99$, $p = 0.992$) thus the null hypothesis is not rejected. This shows that the monitored frequencies are quite near the anticipated frequencies in the case of independence. The test assumptions are, however, grossly breached as 94.9 percent of cells are expected to have a count less than 5.

How long has your organization been operating? * How effectively are the value statements included in new employee onboarding processes?

Table 26

Organizational Age and Effectiveness of Value Statement Integration in Onboarding Processes

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	33.028 ^a	12	.001
Likelihood Ratio	33.550	12	.001
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 11 cells (55.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .58.

The chi-square value shows that there is a statistically significant relationship between the two variables (Pearson $\chi^2 = 33.028$, $df = 12$, $p = 0.001$), thus null hypothesis of no relationship is rejected. The expected count of the cells is less than 5 expected counts however, with a minimum expected count of 0.58, which is in violation of the assumptions of chi-square. This undermines the validity of the findings.

How long has your organization been operating? * How frequently are value statements incorporated into team-building activities?

Table 27

Organizational Age and Frequency of Value Statement Integration in Team-Building Activities

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	24.760 ^a	12	.016
Likelihood Ratio	24.016	12	.020
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 12 cells (60.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .65.

The Pearson Chi-Square statistic is 24.760, and its degrees of freedom are 12, and the level of significance ($p = 0.016$) is less than 0.05. This means that the variables have a statistically significant correlation and therefore the null hypothesis of a non-correlating relationship is rejected. Nevertheless, the expected count of 60 percent of cells is less than 5 (minimum 0.65), which is a violation of chi-square assumptions, thus results should be considered with caution or another test is applied.

How long has your organization been operating? * How well do leadership and management exemplify the company's value statements in their actions?

Table 28

Organizational Age and Leadership Alignment with Company Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	24.535 ^a	12	.017
Likelihood Ratio	22.165	12	.036
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 12 cells (60.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .32.

The chi-square test reveals that Pearson Chi-Square = 24.535 ($df = 12$, $p = 0.017$), which means that the two categorical variables are statistically associated at the level of 5% significance. This implies that the distribution observed could not have been because of chance only. The test assumptions are, however, partly not met since 60 percent of the cells have anticipated frequencies which are below 5 (minimum 0.32).

What is your role in the company? * How effectively do the company's value statements contribute to building a positive organizational culture?

Table 29

Employee Role and Contribution of Company Value Statements to Organizational Culture

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.013 ^a	6	.422
Likelihood Ratio	6.024	6	.421
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 2 cells (16.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.06.

The chi-square figures indicate that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 6.013 with a 6-degree of freedom and a p-value of 0.422 which is not less than 0.05. This shows that the two categorical variables are not statistically associated and thus, the null hypothesis of no association between the two is retained. This conclusion has the support of the likelihood ratio test with a similar p-value (0.421). The total proportion of cells with counts less than five is 16.7 per cent, which is why the general results indicate the presence of a weak or no relationship.

What is your role in the company? * Has the communication of the company's value statements impacted employee performance?

Table 30

Employee Role and Impact of Value Statement Communication on Employee Performance

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.206 ^a	6	.223
Likelihood Ratio	7.763	6	.256
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 1 cells (8.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.52.

The chi-square test does not indicate any statistically significant relationship between the variables ($\chi^2 = 8.206$, $df = 6$, $p = 0.223$ which is not less than 0.05). Thus the null hypothesis of independence is maintained with the possibility that any observed difference in the distribution is probably due to the chance and not the actual effect. The sample size is 155 and only 1 cell (8.3) has an expected count of less than 5 (minimum of 4.52), which is not very high and therefore the test result is said to be statistically reliable.

*What is your role in the company? * To what extent do you believe the company's value statements contribute to team performance?*

Table 31

Employee Role and Contribution of Company Value Statements to Team Performance

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. (2-sided)	Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	7.558 ^a	6	.272	
Likelihood Ratio	7.372	6	.288	
N of Valid Cases	155			

a. 2 cells (16.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.16.

The chi-square test indicates that the Pearson Chi-Square is 7.558 with 6 degrees of freedom and a significant level ($p = 0.272$) which is above 0.05. The null hypothesis is thus not rejected and thus the two categorical variables are statistically not significantly associated with each other. This can be justified by Likelihood Ratio test ($p = .288$). Though the number of cells expected is below 5 in 16.7% of the cases, it is within the acceptable range and therefore the findings of the test are valid.

What is your role in the company? * How effectively are the company's value statements integrated into daily work routines and practices?

Table 32

Employee Role and Integration of Company Value Statements into Daily Work Practices

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.929 ^a	8	.206
Likelihood Ratio	10.787	8	.214
N of Valid Cases	153		

a. 4 cells (26.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.29.

The Pearson Chi-Square value stands at 10.929 with 8 degrees of freedom and p-value at 0.206, being higher than the 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis of independence is not rejected. The same is supported by the Likelihood Ratio test ($p = 0.214$). Nonetheless, 26.7 percent of cells are expected to have counts less than 5, which does not influence the strength of the test, although the results can be regarded with a certain degree of caution.

What is your role in the company? * How frequently do employees apply the company's values to their day-to-day work?

Table 33

Employee Role and Frequency of Application of Company Values in Daily Work

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.589 ^a	8	.957
Likelihood Ratio	2.554	8	.959
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 4 cells (26.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .90.

No statistically significant relationship between the variables is observed in the chi-square test result (Pearson $\chi^2 = 2.589$, $df = 8$, $p = 0.957$): the p-value is significantly larger than 0.05. This implies that the observed and expected frequencies will have differences which are most likely because of chance. Nevertheless, 26.7 percent of the cells contain less expected counts below a 5 and the lowest expected count is 0.90 thus there are violations of assumptions.

What is your role in the company? * How frequently are value statements communicated through informal discussions with colleagues or managers?

Table 34

Employee Role and Frequency of Informal Communication of Company Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.515 ^a	8	.590
Likelihood Ratio	6.825	8	.556
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 5 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.58.

The Chi-square test (Pearson 6.515, df = 8, p = .590) does not indicate any statistically significant relationship between the categorical variables. The p-value is far beyond 0.05 and hence the null hypothesis that there is no relationship is retained which states that the differences in frequencies might be because of chance. Nevertheless, the number of cells is below 5 in about a third of the expected count, which undermines the reliability of the test somewhat.

What is your role in the company? * How effective are visual aids (posters, infographics) in communicating the company's value statements?

Table 35

Employee Role and Effectiveness of Visual Aids in Communicating Company Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests				
	Value	df	Asymp. (2-sided)	Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	7.448 ^a	6	.281	
Likelihood Ratio	7.600	6	.269	
N of Valid Cases	155			

a. 2 cells (16.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.94.

The Chi-square test indicates that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 7.448 with 6 degrees of freedom and $p = 0.281$ which is bigger than the 0.05 level of significance. It means that the variables do not have any statistically significant correlation hence the null hypothesis is not rejected. Even though 2 cells (16.7%), whose expected counts are below 5, the lowest expected count (2.94) is reasonable, thus the test results can be considered reliable and acceptable to interpret.

What is the size of your organization? * How effectively do the company's value statements contribute to building a positive organizational culture?

Table 36

Organizational Size and Contribution of Company Value Statements to Organizational Culture

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. (2-sided)	Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	10.684 ^a	9	.298	
Likelihood Ratio	11.455	9	.246	
N of Valid Cases	155			

a. 3 cells (18.8%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.02.

The Pearson Chi-square value of 10.684 exceeds the critical value of 0.05 by a value of 9 with a degree of freedom of 9 and p-value of 0.298. Thus, no significance was found to reject the null hypothesis of independence, which implies that the variables in this sample of n= 155 can probably be independent. Though there are 18.8 percent cells with counts less than 5 that are expected, this is not very significant, and the test outcome is largely agreeable.

What is the size of your organization? * Has the communication of the company's value statements impacted employee performance?

Table 37

Organizational Size and Impact of Value Statement Communication on Employee Performance

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. (2-sided)	Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	13.883 ^a	9	.127	
Likelihood Ratio	13.778	9	.130	
N of Valid Cases	155			

a. 3 cells (18.8%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.35.

The Pearson Chi-square value of 13.883 with 9 degrees of freedom and p-value of 0.127 (> 0.05) demonstrates that the two categorical variables are not statistically associated. Therefore, the null hypothesis of non-dependence with mistake is not rejected. The same conclusion is supported by the Likelihood Ratio test ($p = 0.130$). The expected counts of the cells that are less than 5 are about 18.8% and the lowest expected count is 3.35 which is not too small thus the Chi-square results are regarded to be valid.

*What is the size of your organization? * To what extent do you believe the company's value statements contribute to team performance?*

Table 38

Organizational Size and Contribution of Company Value Statements to Team Performance

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	21.258 ^a	9	.012
Likelihood Ratio	21.023	9	.013
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 3 cells (18.8%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.35.

The chi-square test reports a significant relationship between the variables (Pearson 21.258, $df = 9$, $p = 0.012$) and that the observed distribution is significantly different than that which would occur in cases of independence. This finding is upheld by the likelihood ratio test ($p = 0.013$). The sample size is sufficient since 155 cases were valid. The expected counts of cells under 5 (minimum of 2.35) are, however, 18.8 percent thus results must be exercised to some extent in terms of assumption compliance.

What is the size of your organization? * How effectively are the company's value statements integrated into daily work routines and practices?

Table 39

Organizational Size and Integration of Company Value Statements into Daily Work Practices

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	32.155 ^a	12	.001
Likelihood Ratio	35.944	12	.000
N of Valid Cases	153		

a. 9 cells (45.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.70.

The Pearson Chi-square test ($\chi^2 = 32.155$, $df = 12$, $p = .001$) shows that the two categorical variables are statistically significantly associated at the 5% level, therefore, the null hypothesis of no relationship is rejected. There are, however, 45% of the cells with an expected count below 5 (minimum 1.70), which is a violation of Chi-square.

What is the size of your organization? * How frequently do employees apply the company's values to their day-to-day work?

Table 40

Organizational Size and Frequency of Application of Company Values in Daily Work

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.662 ^a	12	.260
Likelihood Ratio	15.739	12	.203
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 10 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .67.

The Pearson Chi-Square value is 14.662 with 12 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.260, which is larger than the 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis stating that there is no statistically significant association between the variables is accepted, which means that the observed difference in frequencies may be explained by the chance. Nevertheless, half of the cells are less than 5 in expected counts thus the findings can be addressed with caution and alternative approaches, or category re-grouping could be viewed.

What is the size of your organization? * How frequently are value statements communicated through informal discussions with colleagues or managers?

Table 41

Organizational Size and Frequency of Informal Communication of Company Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	22.208 ^a	12	.035
Likelihood Ratio	24.620	12	.017
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 9 cells (45.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.17.

The chi-square test value ($\chi^2 = 22.208$, $df = 12$, $p = 0.035$) shows that the two categorical variables are statistically significant at the 5percent level. This indicates that the distribution that is observed is not shown to be the same meaningfully as what would be observed under the null hypothesis of independence. But approximately 45 percent of the cells have lower counts than 5 which is a breach of chi-square assumptions and can perhaps decrease the credibility of the outcome.

What is the size of your organization? * How effective are visual aids (posters, infographics) in communicating the company's value statements?

Table 42

Organizational Size and Effectiveness of Visual Aids in Communicating Company Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.835 ^a	9	.096
Likelihood Ratio	15.017	9	.090
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 3 cells (18.8%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.18.

The Pearson Chi-square is 14.835 with 9 degrees of freedom and 0.096 p-value which exceeds 0.05 level of significance. This shows that the two categorical variables do not have a statistically significant relationship, and therefore the null hypothesis of independence is accepted. The same is confirmed by the likelihood ratio test. Though there are 18.8 percent of cells that have an anticipated count of less than 5, the lowest anticipated count is 2.18 which is tolerable, hence the results of the tests are quite reliable.

How long has your organization been operating? * How effectively do the company's value statements contribute to building a positive organizational culture?

Table 43

Organizational Age and Contribution of Company Value Statements to Organizational Culture

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	36.137 ^a	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	30.491	9	.000
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 8 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.16.

The chi-square test presents a Pearson Chi-Square of 36.137, a 9 degree of freedom and a p-value of 0.000, which is just statistically significant association between the two categorical variables at the 5 percent level. In this way, the null hypothesis of non-relation is rejected. Though, half of the cells are expected to have less than 5 (minimum 1.16) counts, which undermines the reliability of the test and the results should be viewed with some distrust and categories might require re-grouping or combining further before making solid conclusions.

How long has your organization been operating? * Has the communication of the company's value statements impacted employee performance?

Table 44

Organizational Age and Impact of Value Statement Communication on Employee Performance

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	34.684 ^a	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	28.084	9	.001
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 8 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.29.

The chi-square of Pearson = 34.684 and degrees of freedom = 9 and $p = .000$ indicate that there is a significant relationship between the variables. Nevertheless, the counts of half of the cells are below five, which has broken chi-square assumptions. Thus, they should be treated with care and should be supported by alternative exact or grouped analysis in terms of choice.

How long has your organization been operating? * To what extent do you believe the company's value statements contribute to team performance?

Table 45

Organizational Age and Contribution of Company Value Statements to Team Performance

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	29.785 ^a	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	31.111	9	.000
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 8 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .90.

The Pearson Chi-square value ($\chi^2 = 29.785$, 9 d.f., $p = 0.001$) indicates that the variables have a statistically significant relationship; hence, the null hypothesis of no relationship is discarded. Nevertheless, half of the cells have a count of less than 5, which indicates that the assumption is not being adhered to; therefore, caution needs to be exercised in interpreting these results.

How long has your organization been operating? * How effectively are the company's value statements integrated into daily work routines and practices?

Table 46

Organizational Age and Integration of Company Value Statements into Daily Work Practices

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. (2-sided)	Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	29.462 ^a	12	.003	
Likelihood Ratio	29.032	12	.004	
N of Valid Cases	153			

a. 12 cells (60.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .65.

The chi-square (29.462, df=12, p=.003) value is statistically significant hence the null hypothesis of no relation between the two variables is rejected. Nevertheless, since 60 percent of cells are not observed to have expected value of five or more, the assumption of the test is not met and thus the results must be taken with cautions when writing formally and following up on the results.

*How long has your organization been operating? * How frequently do employees apply the company's values to their day-to-day work?*

Table 47

Organizational Age and Frequency of Application of Company Values in Daily Work

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	21.897 ^a	12	.039
Likelihood Ratio	21.673	12	.041
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 13 cells (65.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .26.

The Pearson chi-square ($\chi^2=21.897$, 12, $p = 0.039$) represents the statistically significant relationship between the variables at the level of 5 per cent. It is the likelihood ratio test as well ($p = 0.041$). Nonetheless, the chi-squared test assumption is severely infringed upon, with 65 per cent of the cells having expectations of less than 5 and the lowest expectations of under 0.26.

How long has your organization been operating? * How frequently are value statements communicated through informal discussions with colleagues or managers?

Table 48

Organizational Age and Frequency of Informal Communication of Company Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. (2-sided)	Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	21.330 ^a	12	.046	
Likelihood Ratio	21.330	12	.046	
N of Valid Cases	155			

a. 12 cells (60.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .45.

The Pearson chi-square (χ^2 (12) =21.33, p=0.046) shows that the variables have a statistically significant association at the 5% level, and therefore the null hypothesis of independence is rejected. Nevertheless, 60 per cent of the cells do not have the anticipated counts of 5 or more; thus, the chi-square conditions have been breached, and the findings should be used with caution when making an actual decision.

How long has your organization been operating? * How effective are visual aids (posters, infographics) in communicating the company's value statements?

Table 49

Organizational Age and Effectiveness of Visual Aids in Communicating Company Value Statements

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.543 ^a	9	.104
Likelihood Ratio	14.643	9	.101
N of Valid Cases	155		

a. 8 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .84.

The Pearson Chi-square value of 14.543, which has 9 degrees of freedom, is 0.10,4 and this is higher than the 0.05, implying that the variables are not associated with each other in a statistically significant manner. Yet, because half of the cells are expected to be less than five, such results must be taken with caution and not be regarded as well-affirmed.

Qualitative analysis

Question 1: What are some best practices you have tried for cascading values statements within your organization?

The response gathered highlighted that in the organization, cascading values emerged as a dynamic process rooted in storytelling, visibility, leadership, modelling and ritualization. The development of storytelling turned out to be a core tactic to implement abstract principles into common lived experiences such as onboarding, town halls, and recognition programs. Visibility and transparency enabled accountability and digital dashboards, OKR reviews and open data systems transformed the progress into something measurable and trust into something tangible. The rituals that were employed to instill values in the day-to-day rhythms were the value-related stand-ups, peer recognitions, and reflective retrospectives as opposed to symbolic posters. Leadership modelling was another key theme; good leaders were unequivocal in what they valued

in the process of deciding, they were able to trace their own life struggles, and their actions were aligned with their proclaimed values, which made them more credible. Values were not stored outside the context of strategy, becoming evident in procurement, compliance manuals, contracts and even AI nudges to reinforce cultural anchors in real-time. The challenges of equity, inclusion and sustainability often caused productive conflicts, and this proved to the extent to which the pressure of speed and performance can bring out the homogeneity of practice

Question 2: What worked/ what did not?

The response collected stated that storytelling and recognition were repeatedly effective because they created emotional resonance and made values tangible through lived experiences and visible appreciation of aligned behaviour. Authenticity and trust were helped to emerge through leadership modelling and direct communication whenever leaders referred to values in their actual decision-making and when they discussed personal issues. Accountability and less ambiguity were proposed in conjunction with transparency and visibility using dashboards, feedback loops, and data-driven systems. Such practices as frequent reflections, learning circles, and celebrations might be implemented to sustain the momentum, and regular reinforcement over time was secured by regular AI notifications or feedback provided by managers. Work, which is not done, associated with one-time workshops, formal posters, or abstract messaging, failed to embed values in daily practice.

Question 3 What are some common challenges organizations face when cascading these values?

The response highlighted issues related to inconsistency, interpretation gaps, and operational pressures. Inconsistency in leadership behaviour is considered a frequent issue faced, where values are praised in words but selectively applied in practice, eroding employee trust and credibility. The agility and pace pressure, especially in startups, sets tensions between short-term execution and long-term cultural reinforcement and the rapid pivots and high employee turnover, discontinuities and belonging, respectively. Structured programs are constrained by resources, meaning that values are not operational but symbolic. Moreover, conflicting priorities like speed, empathy or frugality and fairness versus speed are challenging to apply in a balanced way.

Question 4: What impact did this have on organizational performance? If any

The response collected indicated that cascading values had a noticeable influence on organizational performance, affecting both tangible outcomes and cultural depth. Decreased rework and increased accountability and reliability of delivery when values were consistently exercised, and efficiency and trust were increased with transparency and data-driven decision-making. Telling stories and recognition enhanced activity and motivation, resulting in greater innovative potential and the ability to solve problems. Unity due to the common values reduced conflicts within the company and helped to define the direction of the decision-making process, which allowed for acting quickly and working more unified. However, the difference in the application of values also represented the absence of credibility, as the selected application of either empathy or equity resulted in discontent and turnover. Reflection and cultural reinforcement were typically diluted by the environment of pace, and short-term agility was sacrificed at the cost of long-term cohesion. Values promoted external reputation and investor trust in some situations, but not in the daily worker experience.

Question 5 Can you share an example or case where a significantly improved org. Outcomes?

Openness and flexibility with a data-driven dashboard enhanced reliability in delivery and avoided burnout with early intervention. Innovation and surpassing the expectations of a client were rewarded by passion and meritocracy, allowing teams to even grow the contracts. Reputation, at both the external and internal levels, was reinforced by ethical integrity and fairness, which helps to convince investors and partners when it comes to negotiations, as well as inclusivity in the design process, which boosts customer satisfaction and adoption. Open innovation promoted cross-functional collaboration, which promoted creativity and integration, proving that collective ownership will facilitate efficiency and pride. Collaboration across functions through open innovation allowed for creativity and cohesion that proved not only efficiency but also that pride is driven by shared ownership. Frugality coupled with honesty in communication helped to keep morale up when money was tight, proving that there is a way to keep the culture in check despite times of cutbacks.

Question 6 What do you see as the future trends in cascading value statements in startups to build a culture?

The future trends identified as human communication and structured accountability to build a sustainable culture. AI-based nudges and digital platforms will customise reminders, monitor adherence in real-time and reward those who are behaving in accordance with principles to make adherence to them measurable and transparent daily. Storytelling and leadership modelling will continue to be central as the values will be dramatised by founders to establish them into daily decision-making, as well as co-creational and dynamic approaches will rejuvenate values based on real-time employee feedback. As the advantage of inspiration, startups will gain more and more value codified into systems of operations, where values like ethics, wellbeing, inclusivity and accessibility are engineered into products as well as processes. Agile practices, rituals, and micro-learning tools will spread culture in short-term routines, balance speed and deep.

Main findings and alignment with research questions

- 1.The employees rate the communication, clarity, integration, and monitoring of the company value statements as generally weak to moderate.
- 2.the findings highlighted that storytelling and recognition were repeatedly effective as they created emotional resonance and made values tangible with the help of lived experiences and visible appreciation of aligned behaviour.
3. Furthermore, the findings highlighted that storytelling and recognition were repeatedly effective as they created emotional resonance and made values tangible with the help of lived experiences and visible appreciation of aligned behaviour.

The major findings are presented above. Core values are important as they help in creating emotional resonance and make values tangible as per the findings highlighted above. This addresses the first research question. Based on the first finding it is evident that values statements exist but are not fully integrated into the system thus answering the second research question. Values played an important role in shaping the organisational culture, and further emphasis on understanding the nuances of this relationship within the context of nascent enterprises. Thus, the values played an important role in overall improvement of the performance which ultimately answers the third research question.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

5.1 Interpretation and comparison of Findings

RQ 1: Why are core values important for the development of Indian startups?

Values are pivotal in steering the course of an organisation & culture. Value statements are critical for developing a shared sense of purpose and direction. Firms that articulate and communicate their values are more likely to enhance employee alignment and customer loyalty. In organisations, the value statement role is well-documented; there is a paucity of research that specifically examines how value statements evolve, cascade, and affect organisational culture in the unique setting of Indian startups (Brown & Cregan, 2008).

RQ 2; How are these values effectively shared and included in everyday activities within the organization?

The findings discussed that employees rate the communication, clarity, integration, and monitoring of the company value statements as generally weak to moderate. It means that, although values exist and are disseminated to some extent, they have not yet been fully integrated into the day-to-day organizational lives and performance practices. Compared to literature, it is determined that it is necessary to cascade value statements within an organization to ensure that these values are not just words on paper but are adopted as part of the daily activities and choices of the workers. The studies, which investigate the methods and processes applied by the Indian startups during their cascading value statement, are required, particularly given the presence of intense growth and resource constraints. The research will provide a guiding hand to startups that are ready to integrate their core values properly, and what best practices to follow, and what not to follow (Cameron and Quinn, 2006).

The findings indicated that storytelling is one of the core tactics to execute abstract principles into common lived experiences on onboarding, town halls, and recognition programs. Accountability and digital dashboards, enabled by visibility and transparency, allowed progress to become quantifiable and transformed trust into something tangible through open data systems and the review of OKRs. Compared to the literature, it is evident that value statements and organisational culture have become a topic of increasing interest in the context of Indian startups.

The effect of value-based leadership on the culture of the organisation has been determined. The research focuses on the need to align the values of the organisation with the behaviours of leaders to enhance a culture that resonates with employees' values and aspirations. Value statements are crafted and communicated within startups, shedding light on the cultural dynamics unique to the Indian startup ecosystem. The relationship between value statements and organisational culture has long been recognised in the field of organisational studies (Ranganathan, 2019).

RQ 3: What effect does incorporating these values have on how employees act and the overall success of the company?

Furthermore, the findings highlighted that storytelling and recognition were repeatedly effective as they created emotional resonance and made values tangible with the help of lived experiences and visible appreciation of aligned behaviour. Particularly, trust and authenticity support emergence through leadership modelling and direct communication whenever leaders refer to values in their actual decision-making and when they discuss personal issues. Compared with literature, it is determined that value statements support in shaping an organisation's culture and providing a moral compass for decision-making. Values played an important role in shaping the organisational culture, and further emphasis on understanding the nuances of this relationship within the context of nascent enterprises (Schein, 2010). The findings discussed challenges faced by organisations while cascading values, are inconsistency, interpretation gaps, and operational pressures. The problem of inconsistency in leadership behaviour is viewed as a common one in terms of which the values are applauded in theory but selectively implemented in practice, undermining employee trust and credibility. Compared with the literature, it is observed that value statements in established organisations are well-documented, and there is a paucity of research that specifically examines how value statements evolve, cascade, and influence organisational culture in the unique setting of Indian startups. The organisational values should not merely be words on paper but should be embedded in the DNA of the company's culture. Company's value to be truly meaningful, they should not only reflect the aspirations of the organisation but also guide everyday behaviours, decisions, and interactions among employees. Organisational values are not static, but they evolve as the organisation grows and adapts to its environment (Sinek, 2009).

The findings discussed the influence of cascading values on organisational performance, affecting both tangible outcomes and cultural depth. Fewer reworks and higher accountability and

reliability of delivery in cases of constant exercise of values, as well as efficiency and trust, were raised with transparency and data-driven decision-making. Compared with literature, it is determined that value statements are effectively communicated and integrated in startups. The research further delves into the strategies and mechanisms employed by Indian startups to cascade value statements, particularly in the context of rapid growth and resource constraints. By identifying best practices and potential pitfalls and providing valuable guidance for startups aiming to embed their core values effectively (Rathi, 2017).

Openness and flexibility with data-driven dashboards increase reliability in delivery and avoid burnout with early intervention. Passion and meritocracy rewarded innovation and went beyond the expectations of a client, enabling the teams to expand the contracts as well. Compared with the literature, it is observed that in Indian startups, a need for leaders to embody the values of the organisation and promote alignment among team members. Leadership plays an important role within the organisation. The research tends to explore the effect of diverse leadership communication styles on the cascading of organizational values (Sharma and Gupta, 2021). Employee perceptions of values, focusing on the correlation with commitment and engagement. Technology also played an important role in cascading value, emphasising the correlation with engagement and commitment. The role of technology in value cascading emphasises internal communication platforms and collaboration tools (Singh, 2018).

The findings highlighted the future trends in cascading value statements as human communication and structural accountability to build a sustainable culture. AI-based nudges and digital platforms customise reminders, monitor adherence in real-time and reward those who are behaving in accordance with principles to make adherence to them measurable and transparent daily. Compared with literature, it is identified that the influence of gender diversity on the effectiveness of value cascading in startups. The strategies for value communication during rapid growth also tend to cascade values. The research further tends to explore the strategies for value communication during rapid growth. In addition to this, human resource practices contribute towards value integration in Indian startups. The relation between ethical decision-making, leadership practices, and value alignment. This further tends to explore the size of the organisation's influence on value cascading and its influence on organizational culture (Tiwari and Choudhury, 2018).

Furthermore, the role of founder values on organizational culture, the process of continuity and evolution of organizational values under founder succession or an altered leadership is not understood. One more aspect that should be explored more is succession planning and its influence on the cascading values over time. Cascading values cross-cultural challenges, although further detailed analysis of the nature of these challenges, possible ways of overcoming them, and the overall consequences in terms of organizational culture are needed. This gap needs to be further investigated to give actionable information to the startups that have businesses in a culturally diverse situation. Human resource practices add to value integration; however, the literature does not cover quantitative analysis of HR practices and their effectiveness in cascading values successfully. It needs a more empirical approach to the role of HR in value integration (Sharma and Bhatia, 2023).

Discussion of ethical decision-making and value alignment does not go into a great deal of discussing the aspects of how ethical considerations and value alignment can influence the behaviour and decision-making of the employees. Future studies on the subject can offer a more comprehensive perspective on the ethical aspects of value propagation. The strategies were explored for effective value communication and the influence of entrepreneurial leadership on value integration, and the link between value alignment and employee engagement. Studies also tend to investigate the role of communication platforms, comparing cascading approaches in bootstrapped versus funded startups. The research also examines the influence of value cascading on employee creativity. The research analyses the cross-cultural adaptation of global startup values. The influence of values cascading on employee well-being in remote work scenarios and strategies for dealing with employee resistance to value cascading.

5.2 Implications for Practice

This direct impact of clear and consistent cascading of value statements on Indian startups is how they can build and maintain their internal culture. Given that most startups work in high-pressure, fast-paced settings, the manner of values communication influences all aspects of employee motivation of employees to decision-making, performance, and identity of the organization. The impacts of cascading of values are as follows: they help in shaping culture, enhance alignment, and promote long-term growth.

Tools and communication

Upon clear communication of value statements by the founders and the leadership teams, the employees develop a common sense of direction. This orientation is useful in establishing a purpose-based culture, as opposed to a task-based culture. In startups where roles are very dynamic and the value system is not well known; a well-developed value system makes the startups less confused and ensures that the teams stay focused on what is important. When these values are put in context and supported by daily behaviors, employees tend to internalize them in a more likely manner, like showing innovation, ownership, and customer focus.

Good cascading of values helps in making decisions that are uniform for every team. startups are prone to uncertainty, constraints of resources and unpredictable changes in the market. With good values, employees can make their decisions independently in accordance with the ethical and strategic values of the company. This minimizes reliance on founders in the approval of the day-to-day work, as well as speeds up the work. It also establishes trust, since employees are empowered to make decisions in a very certain cultural setup.

It has been observed that in India, the rate of attrition in startups is especially high among employees of the early career stage. Communicated in a meaningful way, then the employees will become more attached to the mission of the organization. This sense of belonging will boost engagement and minimize turnover. As soon as the workers have a sense that the gap exists between the purported values and the working environment reality, the level of disengagement grows exponentially. As such, frequent reaffirming of the commitment by the leadership behavior, internal messages and the HRs turn out to be a mandatory procedure to sustain commitment.

Leadership practices

Employees will note how leaders live in line with the values of the organization. Credibility of leadership goes up when leadership actions are in line with the communicated values. The element of trust builds a cornerstone of a culture, which impacts the reaction of teams to a challenge or change in the organization. When cascading of values is only symbolic, employees might perceive leadership as being inconsistent, and that may undermine morale and cultural cohesion. When it comes to startups, small teams are the norm, and they must work very closely. Effective communication of values minimizes the friction between the functions through the

development of a shared language of behavior. Trust is built when a group of people have values that are common to transparency, accountability, and learning. This alignment allows creating conflict-free and enhances coordination, particularly in product-based startups, engineering, design, and marketing should coordinate well.

HR and people process

Improved Onboarding and New Hire Integration: - Rapid scaling can result in the dilution of culture. Definite cascading of values facilitates the acquisition of new employees into the organizational culture at a speedy rate. New entrants are more able to work together once they learn the rules that drive behavior, and culture is made stronger. This is particularly important in startups in India, where first-generation ventures grow fast during the funding periods, whereby teams tend to be full of different expectations and work habits.

Startup ecosystem/investor implications

Value statements are usually integrity-based, inclusion-based, or customer-centricity statements. Their cascading effectively makes the employees aware of ethical decision-making. Strict values in the Indian startup ecosystem, which includes regulatory and compliance, are the way to overcome the risks of data abuse, biased decision-making utilization of unhealthy working practices. The socially responsible investors also prefer a values-based culture and develop brand credibility.

5.3 Future Research Directions

The cascading of value statements in Indian startups can be developed in various ways in future research in a meaningful direction. Longitudinal analysis is one of the promising directions. startups develop fast, and their value communication practices shift as they get a broader group of teams and become an organization of a middle size. Monitoring these changes by age would assist the researchers to comprehend the way these value statements grow, how they are internalized by the employees at varying degrees of growth, and whether the cultural influence enhances or diminishes with the growth of the organization.

A second one is industry-specific comparisons. Indian startups are found in various industries, which include fintech, SaaS, e-commerce, health tech, and mobility. The specific

pressures, regulatory contexts, and customer demand in each sector present distinct challenges to the articulation and presentation of values in both sectors. Comparative studies might show which cascading mechanisms are most effective in the high-pressure product environment and customer-service-driven models.

Future research ought to also address the leadership styles of communication in startup firms. The role of founders in the formation of culture is disproportionate, and they usually become the main drivers of organizational values. Some of the questions that can be explored in research are how founder behavior, storytelling, transparency, and patterns of decision-making influence the knowledge and acceptance of values by employees. This might involve an examination of how charismatic, democratic, or data-driven leadership styles affect value integration differently.

The other field that can be applied is that of digital tools. Hybrid and remote working is increasingly a more frequent phenomenon in Indian startups, and the digital communication structures that include Slack, Notion, the social network within the company, and AI-powered knowledge platforms affect the process of enhanced values directly. The way these tools enhance or undermine value messages is also open to future study, as well as how these devices can enhance cultural alignment by digital repetition, nudges, or user-created content. Diversity factors and the psychology of employees can also be examined by researchers. Entrepreneurships hire people with diverse educational, language, and sociocultural backgrounds. It would be interesting to discuss how these differences can either lead to value interpretation, resistance, or acceptance. It is open to research the role of values resonance across age, functional role, or level of tenure, and the role of personalized communication in enhancing the correspondence.

Lastly, additional empirical studies are required to measure cultural outcomes. The creation of value absorption, behavioural alignment, cultural cohesion, and perceived authenticity validated scales would bring the field out of conceptual knowledge and into measurable knowledge. Surveys, interviews, and behavioural observations were mixed methods research, which would enhance the accuracy of the findings in the future.

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APPENDIX

SURVEY COVER LETTER

Introduction

Dear Leader,

Thank you for supporting my PhD research, your participation is invaluable, and I sincerely appreciate your time and insights.

Survey for PhD Research

Topic: Cascading (Communication and Integration) of Value Statements in Indian Start-ups and Its Impact on Building Organizational Culture

What are Value Statements?

Value statements are the core principles and beliefs that guide a company's actions, decision-making, and behavior. They define what the company stands for and help shape the organization's culture.

Purpose of the Survey:

This survey aims to understand how effectively start-ups in India communicate and integrate their value statements and how this impacts organizational culture. Your insights as a Leader are invaluable to this academic research.

Informed Consent

By participating in this survey, you consent to the data you provide being used for academic purposes, including publication in research papers or reports. No personal or identifying information will be published. If you wish to withdraw your data at any time, please email vijay@upnrise.com.