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Driving Business Growth through Adaptive Leadership, Open Innovation, and Market Sensing: The Role of Purple Ocean Strategy in Information Technology Solution Business

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ABSTRACT

The rapid development of digital technologies and increasing competitive intensity have created significant challenges for information technology (IT) solution businesses seeking sustainable growth. Organizations must continuously adapt to technological changes, customer expectations, and competitive pressures while developing innovative and differentiated solutions. However, limited research has integrated adaptive leadership, open innovation, market sensing capability, purple ocean strategy formulation, and overall business growth within a single research framework. This study aims to investigate the causal factors and relationships among adaptive leadership, open innovation, market sensing capability, purple ocean strategy formulation, and overall business growth in IT solution businesses, and to develop an empirical causal model explaining these relationships. The study employs a quantitative research design supported by qualitative thematic analysis. Data are collected from 400 respondents consisting of business owners, executives, managers, and individuals involved in organizational decision-making. A structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale measures the five major constructs. Descriptive statistics and structural equation modeling (SEM) are employed to assess the measurement model and test the proposed hypotheses. The anticipated results suggest that adaptive leadership positively influences open innovation, market sensing capability, purple ocean strategy formulation, and overall business growth. Open innovation and market sensing capability are expected to positively influence purple ocean strategy formulation and overall business growth. Purple ocean strategy formulation is also expected to contribute positively to organizational growth by strengthening value innovation, customer-centric innovation, competitive differentiation, continuous improvement, and strategic integration. The study is expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions by demonstrating how leadership capabilities, external knowledge, market intelligence, and strategic formulation can be integrated to strengthen the competitiveness and sustainable growth of IT solution businesses.

Keywords: Adaptive Leadership, Open Innovation, Market Sensing Capability, Purple Ocean Strategy, Overall Business Growth
JEL Classification: M1

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background and Importance of the Problem

The rapid transformation of the global economy into a digital economy has fundamentally changed the way organizations compete, create value, and respond to customers. Advances in artificial intelligence, cloud computing, big data analytics, automation, and cybersecurity have created substantial opportunities for businesses while simultaneously increasing technological complexity and competitive intensity. In particular, information technology (IT) solution businesses are increasingly expected to provide more than conventional technology products or services. Customers increasingly seek integrated solutions that address specific business problems, improve operational efficiency, and generate measurable business value. Consequently, IT solution providers must continuously adapt their capabilities, develop differentiated

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solutions, and respond effectively to changing customer expectations and market conditions. The global IT services market has continued to expand, reflecting the increasing dependence of organizations on digital technologies. This expansion has been driven particularly by digital transformation, artificial intelligence, cloud computing, and automation. At the same time, the increasing number of global technology providers and digital platforms has intensified competition and reduced the sustainability of strategies based solely on price or conventional product differentiation. IT solution businesses therefore need to shift from a product-centered approach toward value creation, customer-oriented solutions, innovation, and strategic differentiation.

This situation is particularly relevant in the Asia-Pacific region, where digital transformation among businesses, government agencies, and industries has stimulated demand for cloud computing, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, big data analytics, and enterprise management systems. IT solution providers increasingly operate as strategic partners rather than merely technology vendors because organizations rely on them to improve operational performance, develop innovation, and respond to rapidly changing competitive environments. In Southeast Asia, the expansion of the digital economy, the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises, and investment in digital infrastructure have further increased demand for customized IT solutions. Consequently, providers must develop innovation capabilities, market knowledge, adaptability, and differentiated strategies to achieve sustainable competitive advantages. The Thai IT solution business sector has experienced similar pressures. The continuing digital transformation of business, government, and industrial organizations has increased demand for cloud services, cybersecurity, data analytics, artificial intelligence, and integrated IT systems. However, Thai IT solution providers also face intense competition from multinational technology companies, global digital platforms, and domestic providers. Rapid technological change, increasingly sophisticated customer requirements, and the difficulty of differentiating technology services create significant challenges for businesses seeking to expand their markets and achieve sustainable growth. Competing primarily through price may reduce the ability of firms to create value and may constrain their capacity to develop long-term competitive advantages. Under these conditions, adaptive leadership becomes important because leaders must be able to interpret environmental changes, adjust organizational direction, encourage learning, and facilitate innovation. Adaptive leadership enables organizations to respond to uncertainty by modifying managerial approaches, encouraging employee participation, supporting innovation, and developing strategic responses to emerging opportunities and threats (Heifetz et al., 2009; Yukl and Mahsud, 2010). The literature reviewed in this study indicates that adaptive leadership can contribute to open innovation, market sensing capability, strategic differentiation, and overall business growth by creating organizational conditions that support learning, knowledge exchange, collaboration, and adaptation.

In addition, open innovation provides an important mechanism through which IT solution businesses can access external knowledge, technologies, expertise, and resources. Chesbrough (2003) conceptualized open innovation as an approach in which organizations utilize knowledge flows across organizational boundaries to develop and commercialize innovation (Chesbrough, 2003; Chesbrough et al., 2006). For IT solution providers, collaboration with customers, suppliers, technology partners, research institutions, and other external stakeholders can facilitate access to new technologies and knowledge while accelerating the development of products, services, and business processes. The study's framework therefore considers open innovation as an important organizational capability for strengthening competitiveness and supporting business growth. Another critical capability is market sensing capability, which refers to an organization's ability to obtain and interpret information concerning customers, markets, competitors, and environmental changes. Day (1994) and related market-oriented research emphasize the importance of understanding market conditions and customer needs as a basis for developing appropriate strategic responses. For IT solution businesses, market sensing is particularly important because technological markets change rapidly and customer requirements are often complex. Effective market sensing allows firms to identify emerging customer needs, monitor competitors, recognize market opportunities, and adjust their strategies accordingly. The present study therefore positions market sensing capability as a key factor supporting strategic formulation and business growth. Within this competitive environment, purple ocean strategy formulation provides an approach for combining competition in existing markets with the creation of new opportunities. Rather than relying exclusively on existing-market competition or attempting to create an entirely new market, the strategy emphasizes value innovation, customer-oriented innovation, competitive differentiation, continuous improvement, and strategic integration. For IT solution businesses, this approach may help firms simultaneously strengthen their existing market position and identify new opportunities through differentiated and value-creating solutions.

The literature reviewed in the study suggests relationships among these variables. Adaptive leadership may support open innovation and market sensing by encouraging organizational learning, collaboration, and responsiveness to environmental changes. Open innovation and market sensing capability may subsequently contribute to the formulation of purple ocean strategy through access to external knowledge, understanding of customer requirements, awareness of market changes, and identification of competitive opportunities. Finally, purple ocean strategy formulation may contribute to overall business growth by creating differentiated value, increasing service value, expanding market opportunities, and reducing dependence on price-based competition (Day, 1994; Chesbrough, 2003; Teece, 2007; Wang and Ahmed, 2007; Kumar and Pansari, 2016). Nevertheless, relatively few studies have integrated adaptive leadership, open innovation, market sensing capability, purple ocean strategy formulation, and overall business growth within a single empirical model, particularly in the context of IT solution businesses. The existing literature tends to examine these constructs separately or in smaller combinations. The present study therefore seeks to address this gap by examining the causal relationships among these variables and developing an empirical model explaining

how IT solution businesses can strengthen overall business growth under conditions of technological change and intense competition. Accordingly, this research applies System Theory as a theoretical foundation for examining the relationships among the variables. The study views adaptive leadership, open innovation, and market sensing capability as interconnected organizational factors that contribute to purple ocean strategy formulation and ultimately influence overall business growth. The findings are expected to provide both theoretical contributions to the literature and practical implications for managers of IT solution businesses seeking to develop adaptive capabilities, leverage external knowledge, understand market changes, formulate differentiated strategies, and achieve sustainable business growth.

1.2. Research Question

Based on the background, importance of the problem, and review of relevant concepts, theories, and prior research, this study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the causal factors of adaptive leadership, open innovation, market sensing capability, purple ocean strategy formulation, and overall business growth in IT solution businesses?
2. What are the causal relationships and influences among the factors affecting purple ocean strategy formulation and overall business growth?
3. What is the appropriate causal model of purple ocean strategy formulation and overall business growth in IT solution businesses?

These questions are consistent with the research questions specified in the original study, which examine the causal factors, influence relationships, and model of purple ocean strategy formulation and overall business growth.

1.3. Research Objective

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To investigate the causal factors of adaptive leadership, open innovation, market sensing capability, purple ocean strategy formulation, and overall business growth in IT solution businesses.
2. To examine the causal relationships and influences of the factors affecting purple ocean strategy formulation and overall business growth.
3. To develop an empirical causal model of purple ocean strategy formulation and overall business growth in IT solution businesses.

The objectives follow the original research design, which specifies the investigation of causal factors, the effects of causal factors on purple ocean strategy formulation and overall business growth, and the development of a causal model.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Related Concepts and Theories

2.1.1. Adaptive leadership

Adaptive leadership refers to the capacity of leaders and organizations to respond effectively to changing and uncertain environments by adjusting their perspectives, behaviors, decision-making processes, and strategic actions. Adaptive leadership emphasizes learning, experimentation, collaboration, and the capacity to mobilize people to address complex challenges (Heifetz et al., 2009; Yukl and Mahsud, 2010). For technology-oriented organizations, adaptive leadership is particularly important because technological development frequently creates situations in which existing knowledge and established managerial practices become insufficient. Leaders must therefore encourage continuous learning, support innovation, facilitate collaboration, and adjust organizational strategies in response to environmental changes. The literature used in this study also identifies adaptive leadership through five dimensions: Adaptability to change, learning orientation, innovation encouragement, collaborative decision-making, and strategic adaptability. These dimensions indicate that adaptive leadership extends beyond the individual characteristics of a leader. It represents an organizational leadership capability that enables firms to recognize changes, mobilize organizational resources, encourage knowledge exchange, and formulate strategic responses. In IT solution businesses, these capabilities can facilitate both innovation activities and the acquisition and interpretation of market information.

2.1.2. Open innovation

Open innovation refers to an organizational approach in which firms intentionally utilize knowledge, technologies, ideas, and resources from both internal and external sources to develop and commercialize innovation (Chesbrough, 2003; Chesbrough et al., 2006). Unlike closed innovation, which primarily relies on internally generated knowledge, open innovation recognizes that valuable knowledge may exist outside organizational boundaries. This perspective is highly relevant to IT solution businesses because technological development often requires specialized knowledge from multiple sources. Collaboration with customers, technology partners, suppliers, universities, research institutions, and other external organizations can provide access to new knowledge and technologies. The literature reviewed in the study identifies five dimensions of open innovation: External knowledge acquisition, external collaboration, knowledge sharing, external technology integration, and innovation commercialization. Open innovation can consequently strengthen an organization's ability to develop new solutions, respond to customer requirements, improve services, and create new sources of value. Previous research has emphasized the importance of external knowledge and interorganizational collaboration in strengthening innovation performance and organizational competitiveness (Dahlander and Gann, 2010; West and Bogers, 2014; Bogers et al., 2017; Chesbrough et al., 2024).

2.1.3. Market sensing capability

Market sensing capability represents an organization's ability to systematically monitor, analyze, and interpret information about customers, competitors, market changes, and industry trends. Market sensing enables organizations to transform market information into strategic knowledge and use such knowledge to make timely decisions (Day, 1994; Day, 2002; Day, 2003). The importance of market sensing is particularly evident in IT solution businesses because customer needs and technological markets can

change rapidly. Firms that continuously monitor market information can identify emerging opportunities, anticipate changes in customer requirements, recognize competitive threats, and adjust their strategies accordingly. The present study conceptualizes market sensing capability through four dimensions: Market information, customer needs, market changes, and competitor information. These dimensions reflect the organization's ability to collect and interpret information that is relevant to strategic decision-making. Market sensing is therefore expected to provide the informational foundation necessary for strategic formulation. An organization that understands customers, competitors, and market trends should be better positioned to formulate differentiated strategies and identify opportunities for growth.

2.1.4. Purple ocean strategy formulation

Purple ocean strategy formulation is the central strategic construct of this study. It refers to the process of developing organizational strategies that integrate elements of competition in existing markets with the creation of new value and market opportunities. The approach seeks to balance competitive positioning with value creation rather than relying exclusively on conventional competition or entirely new market creation. The study conceptualizes purple ocean strategy formulation through five dimensions: Value innovation, customer-centric innovation, competitive differentiation, continuous improvement, and strategic integration. Value innovation enables organizations to create differentiated value for customers while maintaining operational efficiency. Customer-centric innovation emphasizes the development of solutions based on customer requirements. Competitive differentiation enables organizations to distinguish their offerings from competitors, while continuous improvement supports ongoing adaptation. Strategic integration connects these activities into a coherent organizational strategy. For IT solution businesses, purple ocean strategy formulation is particularly relevant because firms must simultaneously compete in existing technology markets and identify new opportunities created by emerging technologies and changing customer requirements. The literature in the study connects this strategic approach with value creation, differentiation, market opportunities, and sustainable growth.

2.1.5. Overall business growth

Overall business growth refers to the improvement and expansion of organizational performance across multiple dimensions rather than relying on a single financial indicator. It reflects the organization's ability to expand its market, generate value, acquire and retain customers, improve profitability, and strengthen its competitive position. In this study, overall business growth consists of five dimensions: Revenue growth rate, customer acquisition cost, customer lifetime value, profit margin, and retention rate. This multidimensional conceptualization is appropriate for IT solution businesses because growth can occur through several mechanisms. For example, a firm may increase revenue by entering new markets, improve profitability through operational efficiency, increase customer lifetime value through long-term relationships, and strengthen retention through superior solutions and services. Thus, overall business growth represents the ultimate organizational outcome in the proposed model.

2.2. Literature Surveys

2.2.1. Adaptive leadership

Adaptive leadership is based primarily on adaptive leadership theory, developed by Heifetz (1994) and further developed by Heifetz and Linsky (2002). The theory emphasizes the ability of leaders to respond effectively to complex, uncertain, and changing environments by encouraging learning, experimentation, collaboration, and organizational adaptation. Adaptive leaders do not merely provide technical solutions; they mobilize individuals and organizations to address challenges that require changes in behaviors, values, and ways of working (Heifetz, 1994; Heifetz and Linsky, 2002). In this study, adaptive leadership is conceptualized through five components:

- Adaptability to change - the ability to respond flexibly to environmental changes and emerging challenges (Heifetz and Linsky, 2002).
- Learning orientation - the willingness to acquire new knowledge and learn from experiences in changing situations (Heifetz, 1994).
- Innovation encouragement - the promotion of experimentation, creativity, and new approaches to solving organizational problems (Heifetz and Linsky, 2002).
- Collaborative decision-making - the involvement of diverse individuals and stakeholders in addressing complex challenges (Heifetz and Linsky, 2002).
- Strategic adaptability - the capacity to adjust organizational strategies and priorities in response to environmental uncertainty (Heifetz, 1994).

2.2.2. Open innovation

The concept of open innovation is primarily derived from open innovation theory, introduced by Chesbrough (2003). Open innovation suggests that organizations should utilize both internal and external knowledge, technologies, and ideas to develop innovations and create value. Rather than relying exclusively on internal research and development, organizations can collaborate with external partners and use multiple pathways for innovation commercialization (Chesbrough, 2003). In this study, open Innovation consists of five components:

- External knowledge acquisition - obtaining valuable knowledge, ideas, and expertise from external sources (Chesbrough, 2003).
- External collaboration - working with external stakeholders, organizations, universities, suppliers, customers, or other partners to develop innovation (Chesbrough, 2003).
- Knowledge sharing - exchanging knowledge across organizational and external boundaries to support innovation.
- External technology integration - incorporating externally developed technologies and expertise into organizational innovation processes (Chesbrough, 2003).
- Innovation commercialization - transforming internal and external ideas into products, services, business models, or market opportunities (Chesbrough, 2003).

2.2.3. Market sensing capability

Market sensing capability is grounded in the market orientation and dynamic capabilities perspectives. It refers to an organization's ability to continuously identify, interpret, and respond to

changes in markets, customers, competitors, and the broader business environment. Organizations with strong market-sensing capabilities can detect emerging opportunities and threats and transform market intelligence into appropriate strategic actions. In this study, market sensing capability consists of four components:

- Market information - the ability to acquire and interpret information concerning market conditions and trends.
- Customer needs - the ability to identify and understand current and emerging customer needs.
- Market changes - the ability to detect changes in market conditions, trends, technologies, and business environments.
- Competitor information - the ability to monitor competitors' strategies, activities, strengths, and weaknesses.

These capabilities enable organizations to recognize environmental changes and respond more effectively to emerging strategic opportunities.

2.2.4. Purple ocean strategy formulation

Purple Ocean Strategy can be understood as a strategic approach that combines the competitive awareness of red ocean strategy with the value-creation and innovation-oriented principles of blue ocean strategy, providing SMEs with a framework for responding to competitive pressures while pursuing opportunities for recovery and growth (Gandellini and Venanzi, 2011). The concept has been proposed as an extension and development of ocean-based strategic thinking, particularly for organizations seeking a more systematic balance between creating value and responding to competitive and economic realities (Franceschini, 2011). The concept may also be theoretically supported by blue ocean strategy, which emphasizes value innovation and the creation of new market opportunities, while competitive strategy perspectives emphasize differentiation and the management of competitive positioning (Kim and Mauborgne, 2005; Porter, 1985). In this study, Purple ocean strategy formulation consists of five components:

- Value innovation - simultaneously enhancing customer value while improving the organization's strategic value proposition (Kim and Mauborgne, 2005).
- Customer-centric innovation - developing innovations based on customer needs, preferences, and experiences.
- Competitive differentiation - creating distinctive products, services, capabilities, or value propositions that differentiate the organization from competitors (Porter, 1985).
- Continuous improvement - continuously improving organizational processes, products, services, and strategic practices.
- Strategic integration - integrating innovation, market knowledge, customer insights, and competitive considerations into a coherent strategic direction.

2.2.5. Overall business growth

Overall business growth can be explained through the resource-based view (RBV) and the dynamic capabilities perspective. The resource-based view argues that sustainable organizational performance depends on valuable organizational resources and capabilities, whereas the dynamic capabilities perspective emphasizes the ability of firms to integrate, build, and reconfigure resources in response to changing environments (Barney, 1991; Teece et al., 1997). Business growth represents improvements in an organization's financial performance, market position, customer relationships, and long-term sustainability. In this study, overall business growth consists of five components:

- Revenue growth rate - the increase in organizational revenue over time.
- Customer acquisition cost - the resources and costs required to acquire new customers.
- Customer lifetime value - the total value generated from a customer throughout the business relationship.
- Profit margin - the proportion of revenue retained as profit.
- Retention rate - the organization's ability to retain existing customers and maintain long-term customer relationships.

Together, these indicators reflect both the financial and customer-based dimensions of overall business growth.

2.3. Conceptual Framework

Based on the synthesis of the related concepts, theories, and empirical literature, this study proposes that organizational growth in IT solution businesses is not the result of a single strategic factor. Instead, growth emerges from the interaction of leadership capabilities, innovation capabilities, market knowledge, strategic formulation, and organizational outcomes. The proposed framework begins with adaptive leadership, which represents the organization's ability to respond to environmental changes, promote learning, encourage innovation, facilitate collaborative decision-making, and adjust strategies. Adaptive leadership is expected to strengthen the organization's capacity for open innovation and market sensing capability. Open innovation enables organizations to obtain external knowledge, collaborate with external stakeholders, share knowledge, integrate external technologies, and commercialize innovation. Market sensing capability enables organizations to collect and interpret information concerning markets, customers, competitors, and market changes. These two organizational capabilities provide critical inputs into purple ocean strategy formulation. Through the integration of external knowledge and market intelligence, IT solution businesses can develop value innovation, customer-centric innovation, competitive differentiation, continuous improvement, and strategic integration. Finally, purple ocean strategy formulation is expected to contribute to overall business growth, reflected through revenue growth, customer acquisition efficiency, customer lifetime value, profitability, and customer retention. Conceptual framework of the study is presented in Figure 1.

2.4. Research Hypothesis

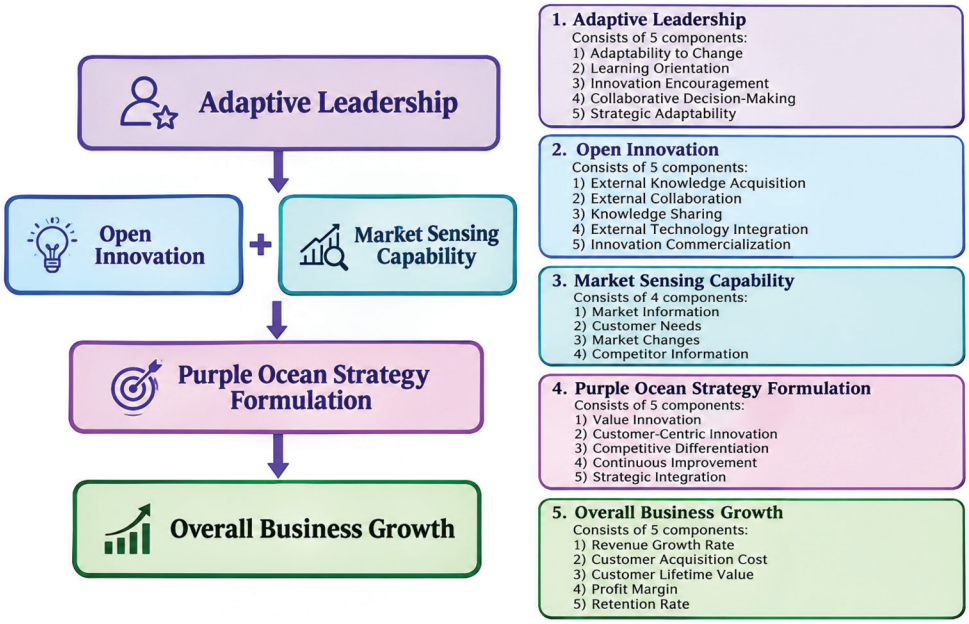
Based on the theoretical foundations and synthesis of previous research, the hypotheses of this study are formulated to examine the relationships among adaptive leadership, Open Innovation, market sensing capability, purple ocean strategy formulation, and overall business growth.

H_1: Adaptive leadership has a significant positive influence on Open Innovation.

H_2: Adaptive leadership has a significant positive influence on market sensing capability.

H_3: Open Innovation has a significant positive influence on purple ocean strategy formulation.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework



H_4: Market sensing capability has a significant positive influence on purple ocean strategy formulation.
H_5: Adaptive leadership has a significant positive influence on purple ocean strategy formulation.
H_6: Adaptive leadership has a significant positive influence on overall business growth.
H_7: Open Innovation has a significant positive influence on overall business growth.
H_8: Market sensing capability has a significant positive influence on overall business growth.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design to examine the relationships among adaptive leadership, open innovation, market sensing capability, purple ocean strategy formulation, and overall business growth. The study was designed to investigate the direct and indirect relationships among these constructs based on the proposed conceptual framework. A structured questionnaire was used as the primary instrument for collecting data from respondents. The quantitative approach was considered appropriate because it enables the systematic measurement of respondents' perceptions and facilitates statistical testing of the relationships among the research variables. The research framework proposes that adaptive leadership influences open innovation and market sensing capability, which subsequently contribute to purple ocean strategy formulation and, ultimately, overall business growth. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design, in which data were collected from respondents during a specified period. The research focused on obtaining empirical evidence from business organizations to test the proposed relationships among the variables. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques, including structural equation modeling (SEM), to examine the relationships among the constructs and assess the overall consistency of the proposed research model with the empirical data.

3.2. Population and Sample

The population of this study consisted of business owners, executives, managers, and individuals involved in strategic management and business decision-making within business organizations. These respondents were considered appropriate because they possess knowledge and experience related to organizational leadership, innovation activities, market information, strategic formulation, and business performance. The study focused on respondents who were directly involved in organizational management or who had sufficient knowledge of their organizations' strategic operations. The sample was selected using an appropriate sampling technique based on the accessibility and characteristics of the target population. A sample size of 400 respondents was considered appropriate for the analysis of the proposed research model using structural equation modeling. The respondents were selected according to predetermined inclusion criteria, including having experience in organizational management, strategic decision-making, innovation, marketing, or business development. The selected sample provided sufficient data to examine the relationships among adaptive leadership, open innovation, market sensing capability, purple ocean strategy formulation, and overall business growth.

3.3. Research Instruments

The primary research instrument used in this study was a structured questionnaire developed based on relevant theories, concepts, and previous studies related to the research variables. The questionnaire was divided into several sections. The first section collected demographic and organizational information from the respondents, such as their position, work experience, and characteristics of their organizations. The subsequent sections measured the five major constructs included in the conceptual framework. Adaptive leadership was measured through five

dimensions: Adaptability to change, learning orientation, innovation encouragement, collaborative decision-making, and strategic adaptability. Open innovation was measured through external knowledge acquisition, external collaboration, knowledge sharing, external technology integration, and innovation commercialization. Market sensing capability was assessed through market information, customer needs, market changes, and competitor information. Purple ocean strategy formulation was measured through value innovation, customer-centric innovation, competitive differentiation, continuous improvement, and strategic integration. Finally, overall business growth was assessed through revenue growth rate, customer acquisition cost, customer lifetime value, profit margin, and retention rate. The questionnaire items were measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Before the main data collection, the questionnaire was examined for content validity by experts with relevant knowledge in business management, strategic management, innovation, and research methodology. The questionnaire was subsequently tested for reliability to ensure that the measurement items demonstrated an acceptable level of internal consistency before being used for the final data collection.

3.4. Data Collection

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to the selected respondents. The researcher contacted potential respondents and explained the objectives and purpose of the study before requesting their voluntary participation. Respondents were informed that the information collected would be used solely for academic purposes and that their responses would be treated confidentially. Participation in the study was voluntary, and respondents were given sufficient time to complete the questionnaire. The data collection process was conducted through appropriate channels, including online and/or direct distribution of questionnaires, depending on the accessibility of the respondents. After the completed questionnaires were received, the researcher reviewed the responses to ensure completeness and consistency. Incomplete or unusable questionnaires were excluded from the final analysis. The valid questionnaires were then coded and entered into a statistical software program for data processing and analysis.

3.5. Statistics Used for Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the respondents and to describe their perceptions of the research variables. These statistics included frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Inferential statistics were subsequently employed to examine the relationships among the variables included in the conceptual framework. The measurement model was assessed to evaluate the reliability and validity of the research constructs. Reliability analysis was conducted using indicators such as Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, while construct validity was assessed through convergent and discriminant validity. Confirmatory factor analysis was also used to examine whether the observed measurement items adequately represented their respective latent constructs. Finally, structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to test the hypothesized relationships among adaptive leadership, open innovation, market sensing capability, purple ocean strategy formulation, and overall business growth. The structural model was evaluated using appropriate model fit indices and path coefficients. The statistical analysis enabled the researcher to determine the magnitude and significance of the relationships among the variables and to evaluate whether the proposed conceptual framework was supported by the empirical data.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of qualitative data and the anticipated results of the study examining the relationships among adaptive leadership, open innovation, market sensing capability, purple ocean strategy formulation, and overall business growth. The qualitative phase was conducted to obtain an in-depth understanding of the perspectives and experiences of business owners, executives, and managers regarding leadership practices, innovation activities, market awareness, strategic formulation, and organizational growth. The qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify meaningful patterns, common perspectives, and major themes emerging from the participants' responses. The findings were organized according to the major concepts and variables included in the conceptual framework. The analysis focused on understanding how adaptive leadership supports open innovation and market sensing capability, how these organizational capabilities contribute to the formulation of purple ocean strategies, and how such strategies may enhance overall business growth. The findings presented in this chapter provide qualitative insights that complement the proposed conceptual framework. The thematic analysis enables a deeper understanding of the mechanisms through which leadership, innovation, market knowledge, and strategic formulation interact within business organizations.

4.2. Data Analysis of the Qualitative Data

The qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify, organize, and interpret recurring patterns of meaning within the participants' responses. The analysis followed a systematic process consisting of familiarization with the qualitative data, identification of meaningful statements, generation of initial codes, categorization of related codes, development of themes, and interpretation of the relationships among the themes. The thematic analysis was structured according to the five major variables in the conceptual framework: Adaptive leadership, open innovation, market sensing capability, purple ocean strategy formulation, and overall business growth. Each variable was analyzed independently to identify its key characteristics and dimensions, followed by an examination of how the variables were interconnected.

4.2.1. Theme 1: Adaptive leadership

The first major theme identified from the qualitative analysis was adaptive leadership, which represents the leadership capability of organizations to respond effectively to changing business environments and organizational challenges. Participants were expected to describe adaptive leadership through several important sub-themes, including adaptability to change, learning orientation, innovation encouragement, collaborative decision-making, and strategic adaptability.

The first sub-theme, adaptability to change, reflects the ability of leaders to adjust organizational practices, priorities, and strategies in response to changes in the external and internal environment. Participants were expected to emphasize that business conditions are continuously changing because of technological developments, customer expectations, competition, and economic uncertainty. Leaders who can recognize these changes and respond promptly are more likely to maintain organizational flexibility and resilience.

The second sub-theme, learning orientation, concerns the willingness of leaders and organizations to acquire new knowledge and learn from experience. Participants were expected to indicate that effective leaders encourage employees to learn from both successful and unsuccessful experiences. Continuous learning enables organizations to improve existing practices and develop new approaches to emerging challenges.

The third sub-theme, innovation encouragement, focuses on leaders' ability to create an environment in which employees are encouraged to generate and implement new ideas. Participants were expected to view leadership support as an important condition for innovation because employees may be more willing to experiment, propose improvements, and accept calculated risks when leaders provide appropriate support.

The fourth sub-theme, collaborative decision-making, reflects the involvement of employees, managers, customers, and other relevant stakeholders in organizational decisions. Participants were expected to emphasize that collaboration can provide leaders with diverse perspectives and practical knowledge, thereby improving the quality and acceptance of strategic decisions.

The fifth sub-theme, strategic adaptability, concerns the ability of leaders to modify organizational strategies when environmental conditions change. Participants were expected to indicate that leaders should not rely exclusively on existing strategies but should continuously evaluate whether current strategic directions remain appropriate.

Overall, the thematic analysis suggests that adaptive leadership can be understood as a multidimensional leadership capability that enables organizations to remain flexible, continuously learn, encourage innovation, involve relevant stakeholders, and adjust strategic directions. These characteristics establish an organizational foundation for the development of open innovation and market sensing capability.

4.2.2. Theme 2: Open innovation

The second major theme was open innovation, which represents the organization's ability to acquire, exchange, integrate, and commercialize knowledge and ideas beyond its internal boundaries. Five important sub-themes were identified: External knowledge acquisition, external collaboration, knowledge sharing, external technology integration, and innovation commercialization.

The first sub-theme, external knowledge acquisition, refers to the process through which organizations obtain knowledge, ideas, expertise, and information from customers, suppliers, competitors, consultants, educational institutions, technology providers, and other external sources. Participants were expected to recognize that valuable knowledge does not exist solely within the organization and that external sources can provide new perspectives for innovation.

The second sub-theme, external collaboration, concerns cooperation between organizations and external stakeholders to develop new products, services, processes, or solutions. Participants were expected to emphasize partnerships with customers, suppliers, business partners, universities, technology providers, and other organizations as important sources of innovation.

The third sub-theme, knowledge sharing, reflects the exchange of information, expertise, experience, and ideas between internal and external stakeholders. Participants were expected to indicate that effective knowledge sharing allows organizations to combine different forms of expertise and avoid relying on isolated knowledge within individual departments or organizations.

The fourth sub-theme, external technology integration, concerns the organization's ability to identify and incorporate technologies developed outside the organization. Participants were expected to emphasize that external technologies can improve operational efficiency, customer experiences, product development, and organizational innovation.

The fifth sub-theme, innovation commercialization, refers to the ability to transform innovative ideas and knowledge into products, services, processes, or business opportunities that create organizational value. Participants were expected to recognize that innovation becomes strategically valuable when organizations can successfully implement and commercialize innovative solutions.

The overall thematic interpretation indicates that open innovation extends beyond simply generating new ideas internally. It involves actively connecting the organization with external knowledge, partners, technologies, and markets. The findings are therefore expected to demonstrate that organizations with stronger open innovation practices may have greater access to resources and perspectives necessary for developing differentiated strategies.

4.2.3. Theme 3: Market sensing capability

The third major theme was market sensing capability, which refers to the organization's ability to continuously collect, interpret, and respond to information concerning customers, markets, competitors, and environmental changes. The thematic analysis focused on five sub-themes: Market information monitoring, customer needs identification, market change recognition, competitor analysis, and opportunity and threat identification.

The first sub-theme, market information monitoring, concerns the continuous collection of information about market conditions, industry trends, customer behavior, and environmental developments. Participants were expected to indicate that regular monitoring allows organizations to remain informed about changes that may influence their operations and strategic decisions.

The second sub-theme, customer needs identification, focuses on understanding customers' expectations, preferences, problems, and changing requirements. Participants were expected to emphasize the importance of listening to customers and using customer information to improve products, services, and value propositions.

The third sub-theme, market change recognition, concerns the ability to detect and interpret changes in market conditions. Participants were expected to identify technological developments, economic changes, changing consumer behavior, and emerging trends as factors requiring continuous organizational attention.

The fourth sub-theme, competitor analysis, reflects the organization's ability to monitor competitors' strategies, products, services, pricing, technologies, and market activities. Participants were expected to indicate that competitor information provides important knowledge for identifying areas of differentiation and potential competitive threats.

The fifth sub-theme, opportunity and threat identification, concerns the organization's ability to transform market information into strategic insights. Participants were expected to explain that market sensing is valuable not merely because organizations collect information, but because they can interpret that information and identify potential opportunities and threats.

Overall, the thematic analysis suggests that market sensing capability enables organizations to develop a more comprehensive understanding of their business environment. Strong market sensing allows organizations to identify changes in customer needs, market trends, and competitive conditions, thereby providing information that can support strategic formulation and innovation.

4.2.4. Theme 4: Purple ocean strategy formulation

The fourth major theme was purple ocean strategy formulation, representing the process of developing strategies that combine innovative value creation with competitive differentiation and responsiveness to customer and market conditions. Five sub-themes were identified: Value innovation, customer-centric innovation, competitive differentiation, continuous improvement, and strategic integration.

The first sub-theme, value innovation, refers to the creation of new or improved value for customers while simultaneously strengthening the organization's competitive position. Participants were expected to emphasize that organizations should seek opportunities to provide distinctive customer value rather than competing solely through traditional approaches.

The second sub-theme, customer-centric innovation, concerns the development of products, services, and solutions based on a deep understanding of customer needs and expectations. Participants were expected to indicate that successful strategic formulation should begin with identifying customer problems and developing innovative solutions that address those problems.

The third sub-theme, competitive differentiation, refers to the organization's ability to distinguish its products, services, processes, or business model from competitors. Participants were expected to highlight the importance of developing distinctive offerings that are difficult for competitors to imitate and that provide meaningful value to customers.

The fourth sub-theme, continuous improvement, concerns the ongoing refinement of products, services, processes, and strategies. Participants were expected to indicate that strategy formulation should not be regarded as a 1-time activity because customer expectations, technologies, and competitive conditions continuously change.

The fifth sub-theme, strategic integration, reflects the integration of leadership capabilities, innovation resources, market knowledge, and organizational strategies. Participants were expected to emphasize that innovative strategies are more effective when they are supported by reliable market information, external knowledge, organizational resources, and appropriate leadership.

The thematic interpretation indicates that purple ocean strategy formulation emerges from the integration of innovation and market understanding. Rather than developing strategies independently from market realities, organizations are expected to combine customer knowledge, external knowledge, innovation, and competitive analysis to create differentiated sources of value.

4.2.5. Theme 5: Overall business growth

The fifth major theme was overall business growth, which represents the organizational outcomes expected from effective leadership, innovation, market sensing, and strategic formulation. The analysis focused on five sub-themes: Revenue growth, customer acquisition efficiency, customer lifetime value, profit margin improvement, and customer retention.

The first sub-theme, revenue growth, reflects the organization's ability to increase sales and generate additional business opportunities. Participants were expected to associate effective innovation and strategic differentiation with the ability to attract new customers and expand existing markets.

The second sub-theme, customer acquisition efficiency, concerns the organization's ability to attract customers while managing the resources and costs associated with customer acquisition. Participants were expected to indicate that innovative and customer-oriented strategies may improve the effectiveness of marketing and customer acquisition activities.

The third sub-theme, customer lifetime value, reflects the long-term economic value generated by customers through repeated purchases, continued relationships, and additional business opportunities. Participants were expected to emphasize that business growth should not focus exclusively on acquiring new customers but should also involve developing long-term customer relationships.

The fourth sub-theme, profit margin improvement, concerns the organization's ability to generate stronger financial returns from its

operations. Participants were expected to suggest that innovation, operational improvements, differentiation, and effective strategic management can contribute to improved profitability.

The fifth sub-theme, customer retention, refers to the organization's ability to maintain long-term relationships with existing customers. Participants were expected to recognize that differentiated value, continuous improvement, and responsiveness to customer needs can strengthen customer satisfaction and encourage customers to remain with the organization.

Overall, the thematic analysis indicates that business growth is multidimensional and should be considered in terms of both financial and customer-related outcomes. Revenue growth and profit margin improvement represent important financial outcomes, while customer acquisition efficiency, customer lifetime value, and customer retention reflect the organization's ability to create sustainable customer relationships.

4.2.6. Integration of the major themes

The thematic analysis of the five variables reveals an interconnected pattern among leadership, organizational capabilities, strategic formulation, and business growth. Adaptive leadership emerges as an important organizational foundation because leaders influence the organization's ability to learn, adapt, collaborate, and encourage innovation. These leadership characteristics are expected to facilitate the development of open innovation by encouraging organizations to acquire external knowledge, collaborate with external stakeholders, integrate external technologies, and commercialize new ideas. At the same time, adaptive leadership is expected to support market sensing capability, as adaptive leaders encourage organizations to continuously monitor customer needs, market conditions, competitor activities, and environmental changes. Open innovation and market sensing capability subsequently provide complementary resources for purple ocean strategy formulation. Open innovation contributes external knowledge, technology, and collaborative resources, while market sensing contributes customer, market, and competitive intelligence.

The integration of these capabilities is expected to strengthen value innovation, customer-centric innovation, competitive differentiation, continuous improvement, and strategic integration. Finally, effective purple ocean strategy formulation is expected to contribute to overall business growth through improved revenue growth, customer acquisition efficiency, customer lifetime value, profit margins, and customer retention. Therefore, the thematic analysis supports an integrated interpretation in which adaptive leadership functions as a foundational organizational capability, open innovation and market sensing capability function as supporting strategic capabilities, purple ocean strategy formulation functions as the strategic mechanism, and overall business growth represents the expected organizational outcome. This thematic structure provides qualitative support for the proposed conceptual framework and explains how the five variables may interact to influence organizational growth.

4.3. Anticipated Results of Quantitative Analysis

The quantitative analysis is expected to provide empirical evidence regarding the relationships among adaptive leadership, open innovation, market sensing capability, purple ocean strategy formulation, and overall business growth. Based on the conceptual framework and the hypotheses developed in this study, the analysis is expected to demonstrate that adaptive leadership has a significant positive influence on both open innovation and market sensing capability. Organizations with stronger adaptive leadership are anticipated to be more capable of responding to environmental changes, encouraging learning and innovation, facilitating collaborative decision-making, and adjusting organizational strategies to changing market conditions. The analysis is also expected to indicate that open innovation and market sensing capability have significant positive influences on purple ocean strategy formulation. Open innovation is anticipated to strengthen organizations' access to external knowledge, technologies, expertise, and collaborative resources, while market sensing capability is expected to improve organizations' understanding of customers, competitors, market trends, and environmental changes. The combination of these capabilities is expected to support value innovation, customer-centric innovation, competitive differentiation, continuous improvement, and strategic integration. Furthermore, adaptive leadership is expected to have a significant positive influence on purple ocean strategy formulation and overall business growth. This suggests that adaptive leadership may contribute not only indirectly through organizational capabilities but also directly by enabling organizations to formulate responsive and differentiated strategies. Open innovation and market sensing capability are likewise anticipated to demonstrate positive relationships with overall business growth, as organizations that effectively acquire external knowledge and understand changing market conditions may be better positioned to improve their revenue growth, customer acquisition efficiency, customer lifetime value, profit margins, and customer retention. The quantitative analysis is expected to use descriptive statistics and structural equation modeling to evaluate the measurement and structural models. The measurement model is anticipated to demonstrate acceptable reliability and validity for all constructs, including adaptive leadership, open innovation, market sensing capability, purple ocean strategy formulation, and overall business growth. The structural model is then expected to provide evidence concerning the significance, direction, and strength of the hypothesized relationships. The anticipated results illustrated in Table 1 are summarized according to the eight hypotheses presented in the study.

Overall, the anticipated quantitative findings are expected to support the proposed conceptual framework, in which adaptive leadership functions as a foundational organizational capability, open innovation and market sensing capability serve as important supporting capabilities, and purple ocean strategy formulation represents a strategic mechanism for achieving business growth. The quantitative results are expected to complement the qualitative findings by providing statistical evidence of the proposed relationships and by demonstrating how organizational leadership, innovation, market knowledge, and strategic formulation collectively contribute to overall business growth in IT solution businesses.

Table 1: Anticipated results

Hypothesis	Expected relationship	Anticipated result
H_1	Adaptive leadership→Open innovation	Significant positive influence
H_2	Adaptive leadership→Market sensing capability	Significant positive influence
H_3	Open innovation→Purple ocean strategy formulation	Significant positive influence
H_4	Market sensing capability→ Purple ocean strategy formulation	Significant positive influence
H_5	Adaptive leadership→Purple ocean strategy formulation	Significant positive influence
H_6	Adaptive leadership→Overall business growth	Significant positive influence
H_7	Open innovation→Overall business growth	Significant positive influence
H_8	Market sensing capability→ Overall business growth	Significant positive influence

5. CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. Conclusion

This study examined the relationships among adaptive leadership, open innovation, market sensing capability, purple ocean strategy formulation, and overall business growth. The qualitative analysis using thematic analysis provided an in-depth understanding of how these variables are connected within the organizational context. The findings indicate that adaptive leadership represents an important foundation for organizational responsiveness because leaders who demonstrate adaptability to change, learning orientation, innovation encouragement, collaborative decision-making, and strategic adaptability can create organizational conditions that support continuous improvement and strategic responsiveness. The analysis further indicates that open innovation enables organizations to acquire external knowledge, collaborate with external stakeholders, share knowledge, integrate external technologies, and commercialize innovative ideas. At the same time, market sensing capability enables organizations to monitor market information, understand customer needs, recognize market changes, analyze competitors, and identify emerging opportunities and threats. The study further concludes that open innovation and market sensing capability are important contributors to purple ocean strategy formulation. Organizations can use external knowledge and collaborative resources from open innovation together with market and customer insights obtained through market sensing to develop innovative and differentiated strategic approaches. Purple ocean strategy formulation emphasizes value innovation, customer-centric innovation, competitive differentiation, continuous improvement, and strategic integration. The findings suggest that the integration of these elements enables organizations to create distinctive customer value while responding effectively to competitive and environmental changes. Consequently, purple ocean strategy formulation is expected to contribute to overall business growth through improvements in revenue growth, customer acquisition efficiency, customer lifetime value, profit margins, and customer retention. Overall, the study concludes that organizational growth can be strengthened when leadership, innovation, market knowledge, and strategic formulation are integrated into a coherent management process.

5.2. Discussion

The findings demonstrate that adaptive leadership plays a fundamental role in establishing the organizational conditions required for innovation and strategic responsiveness. In rapidly changing business environments, organizations need leaders who can recognize environmental changes, encourage organizational learning, support experimentation, and involve employees and stakeholders in decision-making. Adaptive leadership therefore extends beyond traditional managerial control because it emphasizes flexibility and the ability to adjust organizational direction according to changing circumstances. Leaders who encourage employees to contribute ideas and learn from experience can strengthen the organization's capacity to respond to uncertainty and develop new solutions. This finding highlights the importance of leadership as an enabling mechanism through which organizational capabilities can be developed and sustained. The findings also indicate that open innovation is an important mechanism for expanding the organization's knowledge and resource base. Organizations cannot always depend exclusively on internally generated knowledge because technological developments, customer expectations, and competitive conditions evolve rapidly. External collaboration with customers, suppliers, business partners, educational institutions, technology providers, and other stakeholders can provide access to knowledge and resources that may not be available internally. Open innovation can therefore strengthen the organization's ability to develop innovative products, services, and processes. However, the value of open innovation depends on the organization's ability to effectively identify, integrate, share, and commercialize external knowledge. This highlights the importance of managerial capabilities and organizational systems that support collaboration and knowledge integration.

Market sensing capability is similarly important because innovation without a clear understanding of market needs may not produce meaningful customer value. The findings suggest that organizations need to continuously monitor market developments, customer preferences, competitor activities, and environmental changes. Effective market sensing enables organizations to transform market information into strategic knowledge and identify emerging opportunities and threats. The combination of market sensing and open innovation is particularly important because external knowledge provides potential solutions, while market sensing helps organizations determine which solutions are relevant to customers and market conditions. Thus, these two capabilities can complement one another in the strategic formulation process. The findings further suggest that purple ocean strategy formulation provides a strategic mechanism for integrating innovation and market knowledge. Organizations can use information obtained from market sensing together with knowledge and resources obtained through open innovation to develop differentiated value propositions. Value innovation and customer-centric innovation enable organizations to address customer needs in new ways, while competitive differentiation helps them establish a distinctive market position. Continuous improvement ensures that strategic initiatives remain relevant as market conditions change, and strategic integration allows leadership, innovation, market information, and organizational resources to be coordinated toward common objectives. Therefore,

purple ocean strategy formulation can be viewed as an integrative process rather than an isolated strategic activity.

Finally, the findings indicate that these organizational capabilities and strategic processes can contribute to overall business growth. Effective leadership creates the conditions for innovation and responsiveness, open innovation expands access to knowledge and resources, and market sensing provides information about customers and competitive environments. These capabilities support purple ocean strategy formulation, which in turn can contribute to financial and customer-related outcomes. Revenue growth and profit margin improvement represent important financial outcomes, while customer acquisition efficiency, customer lifetime value, and customer retention reflect the sustainability of customer relationships. The overall discussion therefore supports the proposed conceptual framework in which adaptive leadership influences organizational capabilities, organizational capabilities support strategic formulation, and strategic formulation contributes to business growth.

5.3. Recommendation

Based on the findings, organizations should strengthen adaptive leadership by developing leaders' abilities to respond to environmental changes, encourage organizational learning, support innovation, and facilitate collaborative decision-making. Leadership development programs should emphasize flexibility, strategic thinking, communication, problem-solving, and the ability to manage uncertainty. Managers should also establish organizational environments in which employees feel encouraged to propose new ideas, experiment with alternative approaches, and learn from both successful and unsuccessful initiatives. Such practices can strengthen organizational adaptability and create a foundation for continuous innovation. Organizations should also develop systematic open innovation practices by establishing stronger relationships with external stakeholders. Collaboration with customers, suppliers, business partners, universities, research institutions, technology providers, and other relevant organizations can provide access to new knowledge and expertise. Organizations should create formal mechanisms for knowledge sharing, technology integration, joint innovation, and commercialization of external ideas. However, external collaboration should be strategically managed to ensure that acquired knowledge is relevant to organizational objectives and can be effectively transformed into practical innovations.

In addition, organizations should strengthen their market sensing capability through continuous market and customer information collection. Managers should regularly monitor customer needs, purchasing behavior, industry trends, competitor strategies, technological developments, and other environmental changes. The use of customer feedback systems, market research, digital analytics, competitor monitoring, and other information sources can help organizations identify emerging opportunities and threats. Importantly, market information should not remain as raw data but should be analyzed and transformed into actionable strategic knowledge that can support organizational decision-making. Organizations are further recommended to integrate open innovation and market sensing capability into purple ocean strategy formulation. Innovation activities should be guided by actual customer needs and market opportunities rather than being developed independently from market conditions. Organizations should focus on creating unique customer value, developing differentiated products and services, improving customer experiences, and identifying opportunities that competitors have not adequately addressed. Continuous improvement should also be incorporated into strategic management so that strategies can be adjusted when customer expectations, technologies, and competitive conditions change.

Finally, organizations should establish appropriate business growth indicators to evaluate the effectiveness of their strategic initiatives. These indicators should include revenue growth, customer acquisition efficiency, customer lifetime value, profit margins, and customer retention. Monitoring these indicators can help managers determine whether investments in leadership development, innovation, market sensing, and strategic formulation are producing measurable outcomes. Future studies are also recommended to test the relationships identified in this qualitative study using quantitative methods with larger and more diverse samples. Structural equation modeling or other multivariate statistical techniques could be used to examine the direct and indirect relationships among adaptive leadership, open innovation, market sensing capability, purple ocean strategy formulation, and overall business growth. Future research could also compare different industries, organizational sizes, and geographical contexts to determine whether the proposed relationships remain consistent across different business environments.

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