

## **Proactive Approach in Leadership Styles and its Impact on Organizational Productivity**

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### **Abstract**

The objective of this paper is to carry out an analysis of the current concepts/styles of leadership augmented with leadership development programs; and to discuss how these latest leadership concepts are influenced by innovation which has positive effects on team building and achieving synergy, thus impacting organizational productivity. A convenience sample of 100 employees from different functions of a multinational FMCG company was selected. The survey was organized around four sections (each linked to a hypothesis) covering the important aspects of transformational, charismatic and servant leaderships, all augmented by leadership training/ development programs. The results revealed that managers having transformational leadership style (supplemented by charismatic and servant leaderships) were more delivering and their proactive approach in leading their teams through innovative methods, contributed positively towards organizational productivity. The leadership training/development programs also successfully developed the leadership qualities among the individuals as well as teams to achieve synergy in the organization. The good leadership development programs had positive impact on the development of leadership traits among the line managers whose performance due to interaction with their respective teams was much enhanced. The presented model deliberates the usefulness of transformational leadership when it is further supplemented by charismatic and servant leadership styles which work much better in achieving organizational productivity. Transformational leaders are more responsive to changing environments and therefore their leadership styles are influenced by innovations which further bring efficiency and synergy in work environments.

## **1. Introduction**

It is realism that leadership has a direct cause and effect relationship upon any organizations' culture, values and its success amounting to its productivity. The researchers are continually working in line with the industrial leadership to determine tips of leading successful teams which not only maintain cultural values but also find a room for change tolerance and bring synergy which is a key to every organization's success. In the great organizations, these are the people who drive the organization's purpose and its success, and therefore the leaders being the key persons need to lead others as well as themselves to achieve organizational productivity.

The leading strategy in leadership is the one which aims at employee motivation and also shapes business strategy which differentiates in innovation from those of the competitors, in execution and effectiveness. Leaders can appear at any level of the organization; be it a department or sub department, function or cross-function and business unit or a corporate head office. Successful leaders no matter which style they pursue, but they have one thing in common and that is: they influence all those around them in order to reap maximum benefits from the organization's resources including its vital and most expensive component, its people.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Leadership Concepts**

An examination of the literature in leadership concepts gives an insight of the prevailing leadership styles: transactional (not being analyzed), transformational, charismatic and servant leadership. These days, the latest concepts of transformational leadership have drawn considerable attention of the management researchers. Transformational leadership has been hailed as highly effective, producing positive effects for individuals/ groups and organizations (Bass and Riggio, 2006). A number of studies have been published to deliberate these new leadership concepts all over the world and this aspect

has given due importance to the other innovations in developing leadership and efficiency which contribute to organizational productivity. The literature review presented in this paper examines various leadership styles, in three parts: first, the contingency theories of leadership including transactional leadership style; second, studies which link transformational leadership and performance in organizational perspectives and third, studies which view transformational leadership combined with flavors of charismatic and servant leaderships, as a best model linked to organizational productivity.

### **2.1.1. Contingency Theories of Leadership**

The older trait theories have been replaced by contingency theories which suggested that there was still a 'one right way', by that the 'way' would be influenced by context. Contingency theories have a family resemblance to situational theories and these were evolved from broader studies of organizations. Situational leadership has been limited within leadership studies and subjected to appropriation by consultant-academics such as Hersey and Blanchard. Situational Leadership was a movement away from earlier full-blown trait theories of 'what leaders are' (fixed traits) to 'what leaders do'.

### **2.1.2. Transactional Leadership**

Bass (1990) argues that transactional leadership occurs when leaders "exchange promises of rewards and benefits to subordinates for the subordinates' fulfillment of agreements with the leader" (p. 53). The transactional leader, according to Daft (2002), recognizes followers' needs and then defines the exchange process for meeting those needs. Both the leader and the follower benefit from the exchange transaction. Transactional leadership is based on bureaucratic authority, focuses on task completion, and relies on rewards and punishments (Tracey and Hinkin, 1998). We shall not discuss it any further since our research is restricted to transformational leadership only.

## **2.2. Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leadership as initiated by James MacGregor Burns (1978) and Bernard M. Bass (1985), has become a very popular concept in recent years. Transformational leaders rely upon their charismatic abilities. Bass (1960) and Etzioni (1961) identified charisma as a form of personal power. Instead of focusing on service as a means to motivation, transformational leaders rely more on their charismatic, enthusiastic nature to garner influence and motivate followers. They seek to get followers to commit to various organizational goals and facilitate organizational objectives. Bass (1990) said: Attaining charisma in the eyes of one's employees is central to succeeding as a transformational leader.

### **2.2.1 Charismatic Leadership**

Charismatic leadership has been defined as 'the ability of a leader to exercise and diffuse an intense influence over the beliefs, values, behavior, and performance of others through his or her own behavior, beliefs and personal examples (House et al., 1991, p.366). Charismatic leaders have great power and influence, and they inspire and excite employees with the idea that they may be able to accomplish great things. Charismatic leaders transform followers' needs, values, preferences, and aspirations. They motivate followers to make personal sacrifices in order to achieve the mission articulated by the leader and 'to perform at above and beyond the call of duty' (House et al., 1991, p. 364).

### **2.2.2. Servant Leadership**

The servant leader does not serve with a primary focus on results; rather the servant leader focuses on service itself. Lubin (2001) proffers that the servant leader's first responsibilities are relationships and people, and those relationships take precedence over the task and product. Servant leaders trust their followers to undertake actions that are in the best interest of the organization, even though the leaders do not primarily

focus on organizational objectives. Therefore, Stephens et al.(1985) emphasized two servant leader traits, namely leader consciousness and service orientation toward followers, as vital to overcoming the ethical concerns.

### **2.3. Transformational Leadership Behavior**

This is a type of individually considerate transformational leadership behavior which emphasizes the extent to which leaders engage in supportive, developmental or self-sacrificial aspects of the behavior. The leadership style (comprised of individual consideration, idealized influence/inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation) has been the focus of a large amount of academic research (Judge and Bono, 2000). Bass and Riggio's (2006) recent book highlights the significant impact of this model on leadership research. One foundational component of transformational leadership is individual consideration. Individual consideration has been characterized as behavior that allows the transformation of employees to occur (Avolio and Bass, 1995; Rafferty and Griffin, 2006) and is defined as paying "attention to each individual follower's needs for achievement and growth by acting as coach or mentor" (Bass and Riggio,2006, p. 7).

## **3. Discussion**

### **3.1. Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leaders transform the personal values of followers to support the vision and goals of the organization by fostering an environment where relationships can be formed by establishing a climate of trust so that visions can be shared (Bass, 1985a). Avolio et al. (1991) had described charismatic influence as inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation as the major individual considerations. These were established as primary behaviors and all constituted transformational leadership. Bass (2000) had also opined that the aim of transformational leaders was to align their own and others' interests with the good of the individuals, teams and organization.

Whittington (2004) had also concluded that the transformational leader's motive toward organizational objectives could become self-serving for high achievers. Therefore, we propose:

**Hypothesis 1:** Transformational leader's display positive motives towards high achievers/teams and therefore become result focused while contributing more towards organizational productivity.

### **3.2. Charismatic Leadership**

Graham (1991) opined transformational leadership as an "enriched model of charismatic leadership" (p. 109) and attributed it to high individual /team motivation levels by virtue of leaders' charisma. Stone et al. (2004) had also deduced from his research work that charismatic leaders were to rely more on their charismatic attributes to influence followers (p. 355). There is much said about the charismatic leaders who may have manipulated their followers due to charismatic powering in order to ascend to strategic leadership positions. Therefore, we propose:

**Hypothesis 2:** Charismatic leaders because of their charismatic attributes may manipulate their followers well and therefore it contributes positively towards organizational productivity.

### **3.3. Servant Leadership**

There were many thoughts about the servant leader's morality, his/her sacrificial service and finally the leader's conscience which were deliberated upon in Greenleaf's (1977) classic statement: "The servant leader is servant first. It begins with a natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead" (p. 27). Greenleaf had explained that servant-first leaders make sure that their followers highest priority needs are served and they are offered altruism as foundational to serving others. Therefore, we propose:

**Hypothesis 3:** Servant leader's motives towards serving others are more altruistic in nature, thus contributing more positively towards organizational productivity.

### **3.4. Trainings and Innovation in Leadership Styles Enhance Team Building and Synergy**

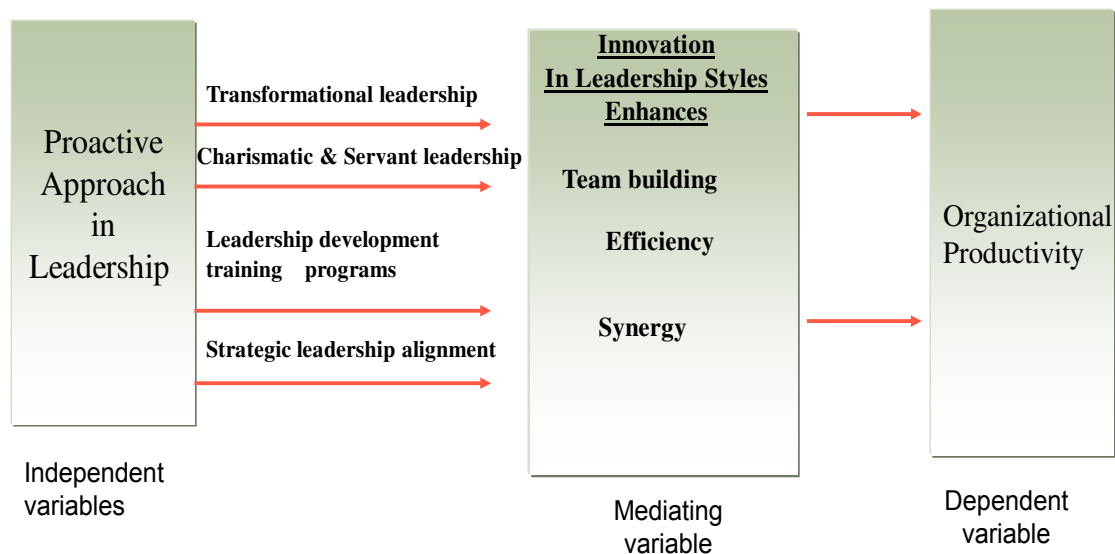
Transformational, charismatic and servant leadership styles do not have exclusive boundaries rather these have many over-lapping areas. When these styles are combined together, same can bring about positive changes in organization's productivity because these styles through innovations and leadership training programs may team up good spirits and bring efficiency through synergy. Here, the followers recognize that their leaders truly follow the theme of ideal leadership (Braham, 1999). These innovations and trainings help leaders to adopt distinct approaches to lead their teams and achieve efficiency and synergy in all types of organizational work environments. Therefore, we propose:

**Hypothesis 4:** Innovations in transformational, charismatic and servant leadership styles when combined with leadership trainings help positively in achieving team building, efficiency/synergy, and thus contributing towards organizational productivity.

## **4. Research Model and Design**

The purpose of this paper is to discuss and investigate the effects of transformational, charismatic and servant leaders and their contributions towards organizational productivity. The leadership development programs through innovations further augment these leadership styles to achieve more positive results in achieving productivity. The style of transformational leadership combined with charismatic and servant leaders' style and same augmented through trainings, constitute independent variables of our study whereas innovations in the said leadership concepts form a mediating variable which has been introduced in the leadership process. All these variables contribute more effectively in organizational productivity, being dependent

variable. In order to evaluate the efficacy of this model as shown in Fig:1, a descriptive qualitative research design was thought as the most appropriate.



**Fig. 1 Proactive Approach in Leadership Styles and its Impact on Organizational Productivity**

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## 4.1. Variables of Research Study

### 4.1.1. Dependent Variable

In our research design, we need to focus on organizational productivity which is dependent variable and an outcome of good leadership strategy. Blake and Mouton (1964) had developed their well-known Leadership Grid based on contrasting the two dimensions; first, concern for people and the second, being concern for production while highlighting the dichotomy between task and relationship responsibilities in leadership.



#### **4.1.2. Independent Variables**

The use of effective methods of leadership styles i.e, transformational, charismatic and servant leadership augmented by leadership development program/trainings, help both the employers and the employees, in bringing innovations in leadership and managing well the organizational productivity. Therefore these independent variables i.e, transformational, servant and charismatic leadership concepts are further augmented by training and developing leadership traits.

#### **4.1.3. Mediating Variable**

Innovation is the outcome of good leadership strategy and it also contributes positively to organizational productivity, therefore it turns out to be a mediating variable of the research study. Team building brings efficiency in the work system and both combined together results into synergy.

#### **4.2. Convenience Sampling**

A convenience sample of 100 employees from different functions of a multinational company was selected who were given a Questionnaire to be completed in own time and same returned after a week's time. Response rate was 77%. The survey was organized around four sections (for each hypothesis) covering the important aspects of transformational leadership, charismatic leadership and servant leadership, and same augmented by leadership development program/trainings. The innovations introduced in leadership styles were to achieve team building, synergy thus bringing efficiency. This study used data from four different departments i.e, Finance, HR, Supply Chain and Sales & Marketing of a leading FMCG company, of which 12-22 employees each department participated in the survey.

#### **4.3. Survey Instrument**

The present study uses linear modeling for the analysis of the single-level data which has been collected through Questionnaire (Annex A), used as instrument. The general

idea behind this method is that organizational performance is affected by three Independent Variables and one Mediating Variable , and the results worked out as outcome of study are shown separately (see Table 1). The reflection of each hypothesis (all proved as true) is also shown in histograms at Figs: 2-5.

**Table-1**

### SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

Proactive Approach in Leadership Styles and its Impact on Organizational Productivity  
 77 employees had participated in the survey and their responses showing level of importance against each question (5 degree likert scale ranging from Strongly(S) Agree -- Agree –Neutral – Disagree – Strongly(S) Disagree) were recorded and there after a summary was prepared for each hypothesis to draw histograms and conclude findings.

Questions	S. Agree	Agree	Neutra l	Disag ree	S. Disagr ee
<b><u>Transformational(T) leadership-H1</u></b>					
1. Do T/leaders rely more on their personality traits to garner influence and motivate followers?	5	17	36	13	6
2. Do T/leaders have involvement in the development of their employees for meeting their goals and objectives?	5	38	18	8	8
3. Do T/leaders rely upon their abilities to enhance performance In achieving organizational productivity?	8	41	19	7	2

Total	18	96	73	28	16
Averages	4.5	24	18.25	7	4
<b>Charismatic(C) leadership-H2</b>					
4..Do you think C/leadership has an influence over employees beliefs/values and performance through own behavior?	18	19	31	14	5
5. 5.Do the C/leaders motivate followers to make personal sacrifices in order to achieve the mission articulated by them?	9	33	19	13	3
6.Is there any Counseling/couching by C/leaders for employees if they need someone to go for help?	12	35	18	7	5
7.Is the level of feeling high in the organizational leadership regarding meeting its strategic goals of productivity?	7	35	20	8	7
Total	46	122	88	42	20
Averages	9.2	24.4	17.6	8.4	4
<b><u>Servant(S) leadership-H3</u></b>					
8.Do S/leaders serve with a primary focus on results rather than focusing on service itself ?	3	11	27	23	13

9. Do S/leaders trust their followers to undertake actions that are in the best interest of the organization?	7	27	15	16	12
10. Are there any opportunities afforded to employees by S/leaders for help if required in the service orientations?	8	20	22	16	11
11. Is there any assistance/training by S/leaders for followers to overcome the difficulties at work and thus achieving productivity?	6	22	20	17	12
Total	24	80	84	72	48
Averages	8	26.666 67	28	24	16
<b><u>Innovation in leadership -H4</u></b>					
12. Are you happy the way leadership programs are conducted and innovations introduced in your organization?	8	26	17	19	7
13. Do you have sufficient feedback from your leaders to know that he/she is satisfied with your job performance?	11	32	20	10	4
14. Are you satisfied with your leader's efforts in building teams and thereby achieving synergy to enhance	6	26	27	11	7

organizational productivity?					
Total	25	84	64	40	18
Averages	8.3333		21.333	13.33	
	33	28	33	333	6

#### 4.4. Hypothesis Testing

**Hypothesis 1:** Transformational leader's display positive motives towards high achievers/teams and therefore become result focused while contributing more towards organizational productivity.

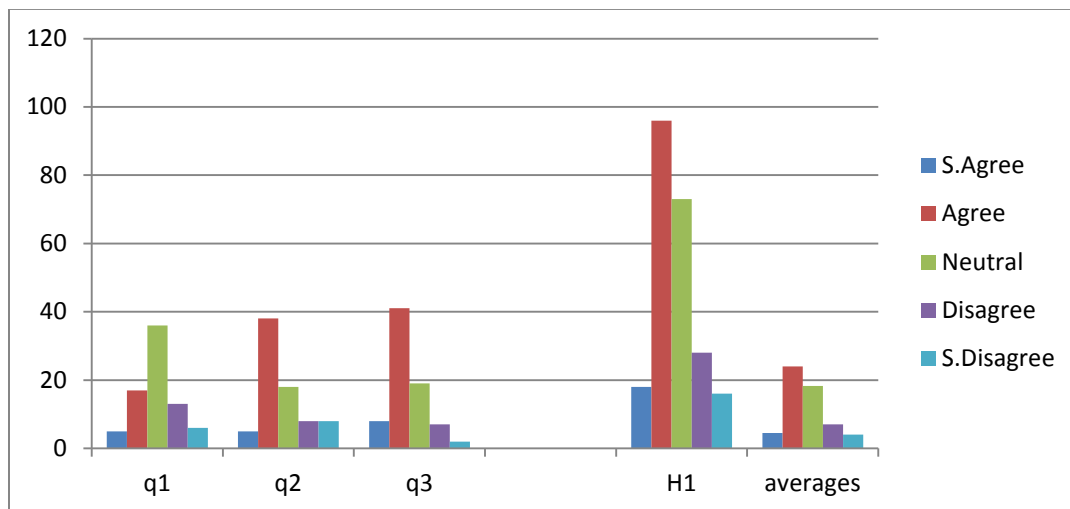


Fig2: Histogram showing inter relationship between axis X(Likert scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree showing 5 levels) and axis Y(Responses of sampled employees) for H1(Proved True).

**Hypothesis 2:** Charismatic leaders because of their charismatic attributes may manipulate their followers well and therefore it contributes positively towards organizational productivity.

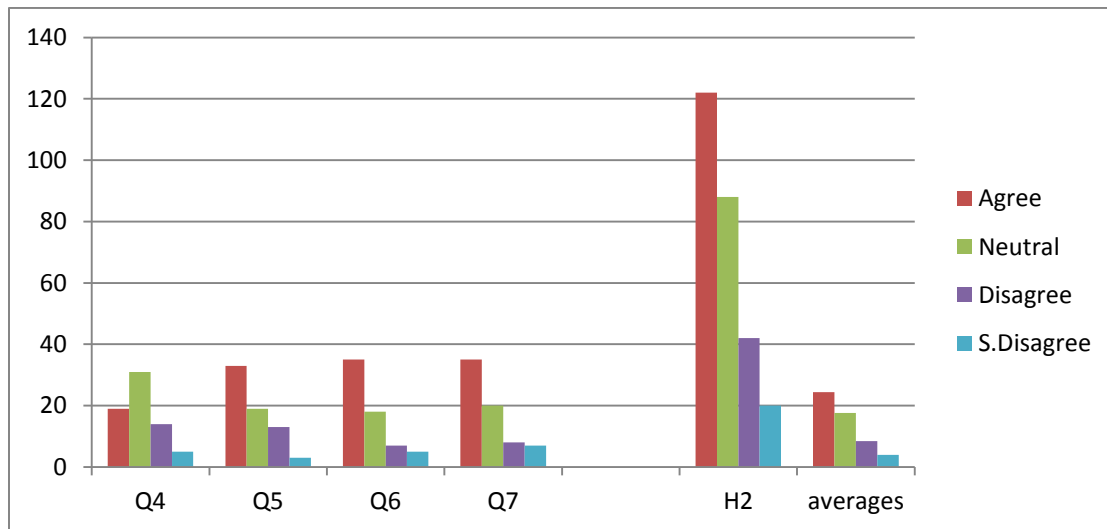


Fig3: Histogram showing inter relationship between axis X(Likert scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly disagree showing 5 levels) and axis Y(Responses of sampled employees) for H2 (Proved True).

**Hypothesis 3:** Servant leader's motive towards serving others are more altruistic in nature, thus contributing more positively towards organizational productivity.

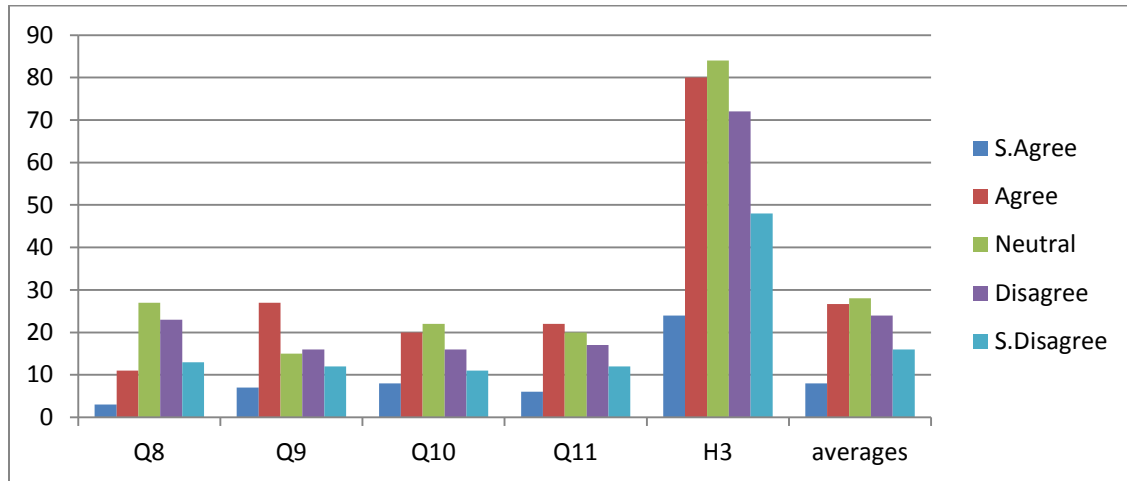


Fig4: Histogram showing inter relationship between axis X(Likert scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly showing 5 levels) and axis Y(Responses of sampled employees) for H3(Proved True).

**Hypothesis 4:** Innovations in transformational, charismatic and servant leadership styles when combined with leadership trainings help positively in achieving team building, efficiency/synergy, and thus contributing towards organizational productivity.

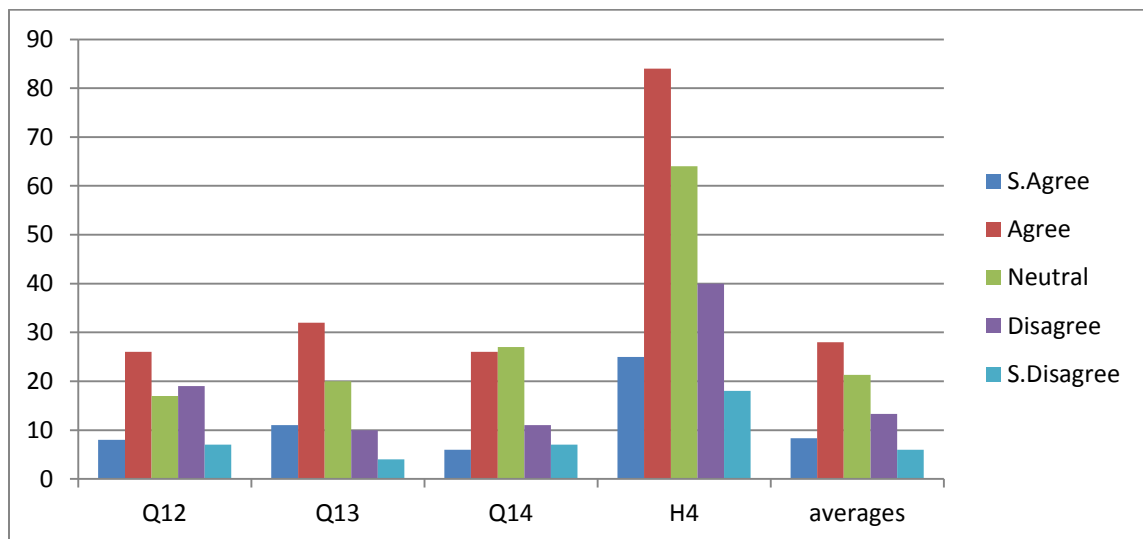


Fig5: Histogram showing inter relationship between axis X(Likert scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly showing 5 levels) and axis Y(Responses of sampled employees) for H4 (Proved True).

## **5. Analysis of Leadership Styles and Findings**

A detailed analysis of leadership styles combined with leadership development programs and trainings as indicated in the model, shows that proactive approach to leadership styles and its related measures provide an exposure to a spectrum of leadership issues. The results reveal that most of the supervisor/managers prefer to assume transformational leadership style combined with charismatic and servant leader's and they also encourage innovations. These leaders promote team building/synergy by supporting a sense of commitment and encouraging their team members to reflect a team identity through cooperation, which ultimately contribute to organizational productivity.

## **6. Findings**

6.1. The research has deduced that if someone has been successful in his life-time objectives set forth in the leading roles, it is because he/she had good leadership skills.

6.2. The research has also concluded that transformational leaders having charisma and service orientations towards followers have been most successful in leading their teams well and thus enhancing organizational productivity.

6.3. The leadership training/development program must have proactive approach in dealing with the most important issues on effective leadership, in changing environments. These programs successfully develop the quality of individuals as well as



teams to see a vision and look into the future, and develop synergy and aspirations in line with organizational strategy.

6.4. The research also highlights that leadership is not an entity which can be much easily passed on to others. A leadership having a down side, may still retain its success since the leaders of the past were dynamic and the current leaders simply kept things running the same as before but it may be short lived.

6.5. Sometimes organizations have been running successfully though they had only marginally competent people leading them. It was so because the structure of the organization at times, helped to make up for a leader's short comings; may it be due to their talented staff who in own way, made up for their leader's deficiencies.

## **7. Research Limitations**

The study was conducted in one multinational FMCG company and future research should explore the influence of these leadership elements in other industrial settings to validate the said hypothesis.

## **8. Practical Implications**

The good leadership development programs had positive impact on the development of leadership traits among the line managers whose performance due to interaction with their respective teams was much enhanced.

## **9. Conclusion**

The themes of new leadership styles and the innovative concepts have attracted considerable interest from both, the academicians and the management practitioners. Much of the interest in the leadership styles and its concepts is based on implicit claims that the leadership has direct influence on organizational performance, but after

deliberated studies we have found out explicitly that transformational leadership directly affects organizational productivity. However, the inter-relationships between various

styles of leadership may have different outcomes in different work environments. The development of leadership skills through training and development programs have been analyzed in each perspective of work environment and the inter relationships or association between the different styles of leadership were deliberated. This paper has explicitly analyzed the delivering of leaders having transformational leadership style (including charisma and servant leaders) and same combined with development programs and measures for strategic leadership alignments to organizational productivity.

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## Annex A

### **Research Instrument**

Proactive Approach in Leadership Styles and its Impact on Organizational Productivity

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Position Held \_\_\_\_\_ Department \_\_\_\_\_  
Company \_\_\_\_\_

Please tick below your reaction/your level of importance against each question for 5 degree likert scale ranging as Strongly-Agree –Agree-Neutral-Disagree – S Disagree :

S. Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	S. Disagree
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

## **Questions**

### Transformational(T) leadership

1. Do T/leaders rely more on their personality traits to garner influence and motivate followers?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Do T/leaders have involvement in the development of their employees for meeting their goals and objectives?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Do T/leaders rely upon their abilities to enhance performance in achieving organizational productivity?

\_\_\_\_\_

### Charismatic(C) leadership

4. Do you think C/leadership has an influence over employees beliefs/values and performance through own behavior?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Do the C/leaders motivate followers to make personal sacrifices in order to achieve the mission articulated by them?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Is there any Counseling/couching by C/leaders for employees if they need someone to go for help?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Is the level of feeling high in the organizational leadership regarding meeting its strategic goals of productivity?

\_\_\_\_\_

**Servant(S) leadership**

8. Do S/leaders serve with a primary focus on results rather than focusing on service itself ?

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Do S/leaders trust their followers to undertake actions that are in the best interest of the organization?

\_\_\_\_\_

10. Are there any opportunities afforded to employees by S/leaders for help if required in the service orientations?

\_\_\_\_\_

11. Is there any assistance/training by S/leaders for followers to overcome the difficulties at work and thus achieving productivity?

\_\_\_\_\_

**Innovation in leadership**

12. Are you happy the way leadership programs are conducted and innovations introduced in your organization?

\_\_\_\_\_

**13.** Do you have sufficient feedback from your leaders to know that he/she is satisfied with your job performance?

\_\_\_\_\_

**14.** Are you satisfied with your leader's efforts in building teams and thereby achieving synergy to enhance organizational productivity?

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**Remarks (Any leadership aspect)**

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