

Leadership and Management in Practice



Table of Contents

- ◆ Introduction
- ◆ Brief Background
- ◆ Challenge experienced by the organization
- ◆ Leadership Approach Adapted
- ◆ Critical Evaluation
- ◆ Alternative Leadership Approach
- ◆ Reflection on Leadership
- ◆ Conclusion
- ◆ References

Introduction

- ◆ Leadership and management theories refer to strategic methodologies which define the core characteristics of effective leaders and how they can impact the corporate practices necessary to achieve goals (Suharto, 2023).
- ◆ The organisation selected for this report is Marks & Spencer which is a dominant British retail, home décor and grocery brand (Marks & Spencer, 2026).



Brief Background

- ◆ Initially, M&S was launched as a small-scale market stall and soon it transformed into a multinational brand known for its high-end fashionwear, casualwear and food products.
- ◆ In the late 1990s and 2000s, the brand suffered from a severe strategic drift (Scribd, 2026).



Challenge experienced by the organisation

- ◆ For more than 20 years, Marks & Spencer believed that the customers would show long-term commitment towards the firm, due to which it suffered from strategic drift (Omee, 2023).
- ◆ This means the brand did not modernised its supply chain, and warehouse practices as per present consumer preferences and remain tied to traditional retail approaches.



Leadership Approach Adapted

- ◆ Marks & Spencer utilised a strategic combination of transformational and transactional leadership to surpass this vulnerable phase.

Leadership Theory 1: Transformational Leadership Theory

- ◆ **Brief explanation:** It focuses on leaders who encourage individuals and employees to exceed their work expectations and assist the firm in achieving long-term objectives (Ned, and Umesi, 2023).
- ◆ **Application to organisation:** M&S utilised transformational leadership theory to navigate the strategic drift and focus on corporate restructuring (Banks, 2024).



Continue

Strengths & Limitations

Strengths	Limitations
• Leaders encouraged employees to work on creative practices without the fear of failure.	• The corporate culture of positive dissatisfaction resulted in high workplace stress and poor work ethics.
• The brand was able to bring diverse sectors like food, clothing and grocery into a single unified platform (Wichmann, Wiegand, and Reinartz, 2022). • It mitigated strategic drift and embedded modern retail practices.	• The major decision making process relied on single individual. • This delayed the final decision timelines in case of emergency situations.

Continue

Leadership Theory 2: Transactional Leadership Theory

- ◆ **Brief Explanation:** Transactional leadership theory gives importance to the mutual work expectations that are present between leaders and employees (Swan, 2023).
- ◆ **Application to the organisation:** During the restructuring phase, Marks & Spencer used transactional leadership to enforce operational discipline across its retail stores across diverse locations within the United Kingdom.



Transactional
Leadership

Continue

◆ Strengths and Limitations:

Strengths	Limitations
It supported managing the diverse workforce by setting clear expectations.	The brand only focused on embedding creative practices in specific departments.
Operational discipline was necessary to navigate large-scale setbacks and lower financial loss.	Over-reliance on fulfilling frustrated retail workers and increased workplace anxiety.

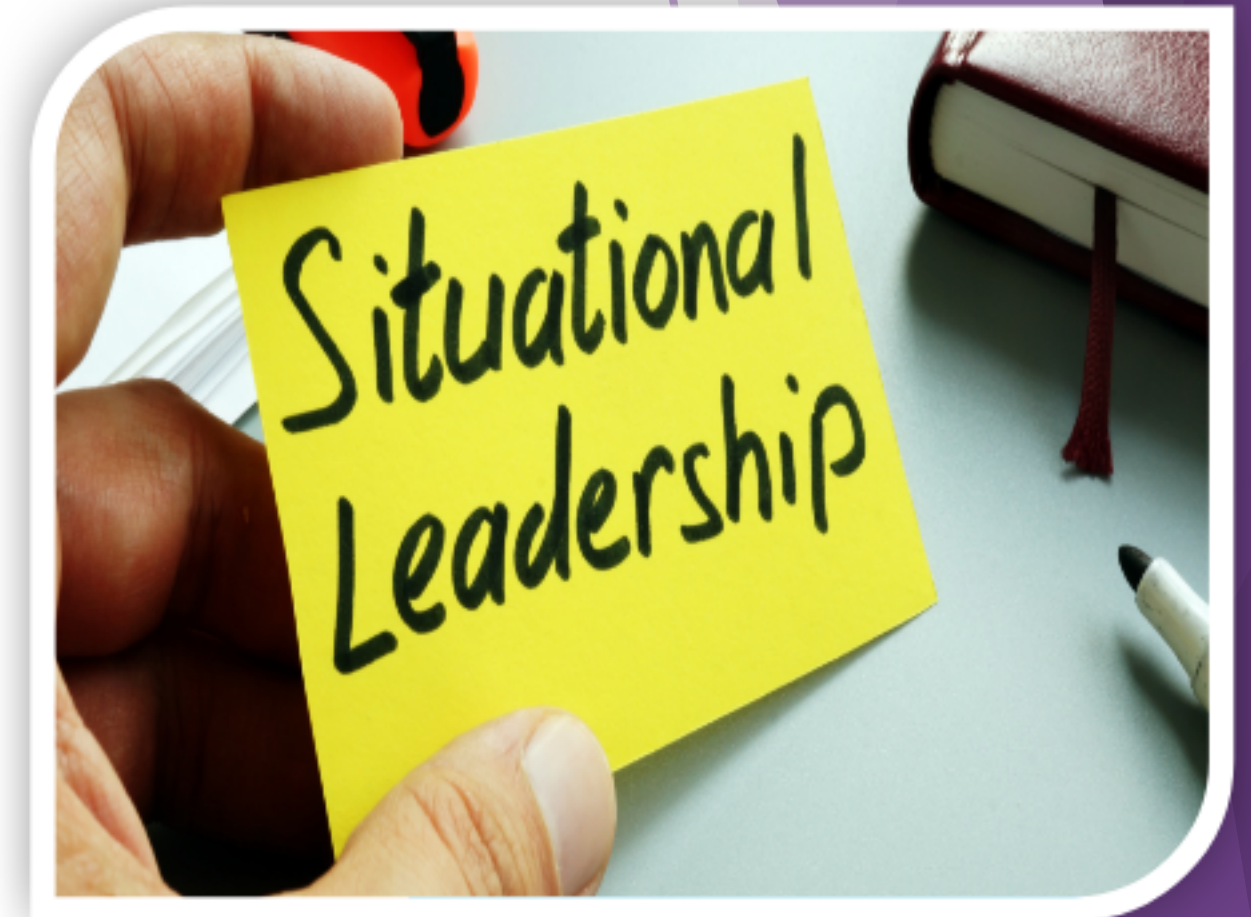
Critical Evaluation

Evaluative factor	Transformational Leadership	Transactional leadership
Effectiveness of the leadership approach	Highly effective as it helped to surpass the strategic shift.	Highly effective for crisis management and maintaining operational discipline.
Impact on Employees	Mixed : It brought diverse departments into a single platform, but also led to employee burnout (Gabriel, and Aguinis, 2022)	Demotivating Suppressed innovative practices
Impact on Organisational Performance	Exceptional It modernised retail operations and amplified market growth.	Vital It helped in handling the financial crisis.
What worked well	broke rigid corporate practices Unified vision	Operational clarity Crisis management
What did not work	High employee burnout Sole dependency	Restricts innovation Disrupt workplace ethics

Alternative Leadership Approach

Alternative approach: Situational Leadership

- ◆ Marks & Spencer could have used this tactical approach as this theory highlights that there is no single effective style is universally most appropriate (Rajput, 2025).
- ◆ It is quite justified as the tactical combination of transformational and transactional leadership was able to resolve the issue of structural shift, but it also affected the psychological health of employees and workplace.



Continue

Business examples:

- ◆ **Tesco Plc:** In 2014, the brand suffered from a financial crisis of £263 million, because of which it became absolutely necessary to lower its capital investment and refine its product lines (Research Prospect, 2026).
- ◆ **Easy Jet Plc:** The crew of the brand is skilled but still find it difficult to maintain their work morale because of poor management structures (Glassdoor.co.in, 2026).



Reflection on Leadership

- ◆ I was a term leader in a university project where I was asked to handle diverse team.
- ◆ I used a transactional leadership approach and set strict project timelines, distributed the work among team members and evaluated their performance to avoid operational and technical glitches (Bhatt, 2026).



Conclusion

- ◆ It is concluded from the report that the organisation suffered from a severe strategic drift and macro-economic disruptions.
- ◆ So, to navigate this, the brand adopted a strategic combination of transformational and transactional leadership styles.



References

Books and Journals

- ◆ Banks, O., (2024). Driving retail transformation: How to navigate disruption and change. Practical Inspiration Publishing.
- ◆ Bhatt, B.B., (2026). Integrating Network Tools and Techniques with Transactional Leadership Style: a Comparative Analysis of Performance.
- ◆ Gabriel, K.P. and Aguinis, H., (2022). How to prevent and combat employee burnout and create healthier workplaces during crises and beyond. Business horizons, 65(2), pp.183-192.
- ◆ Joy, F.H., (2025). Analyzing the role of monetary and non-monetary incentives in employee retention: An in-depth study on PRAN-RFL's export department.
- ◆ Ned, A.E. and Umesi, C.D., (2023). Effective leadership and employee motivation for sustainable development. Journal of Education in Developing Areas, 31(2), pp.310-321.
- ◆ Omee, F.A., (2023). Apparel supply chain management and challenges: An analysis on Marks and Spencer (Bangladesh sourcing office).
- ◆ Rajput, A.A., (2025). The Influence of Digital Marketing Strategies on Consumer Buying Behavior: "A Comprehensive Analysis of Marks and Spencer's Retail in the UK" (Doctoral dissertation, University of Wales Trinity Saint David)

**Thank
you**

A decorative graphic for the text "Thank you". Above the word "Thank" are three horizontal bars: a small purple one, a medium teal one, and a medium red one. To the left of the word "you" is a 5x6 grid of small dark blue dots. Below the word "you" are two horizontal bars: a medium yellow one and a medium purple one.