

Does current popular Leadership literature show a preference for transformational leadership?

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Over the past few years, a great deal has been researched and written on the topic of leadership from an academic perspective, which has led to the emergence of a confusing number of models and methodologies, each of which seeks to show in different ways which type of leadership is successful and ultimately works best, i.e. produces the best results.

This study approaches the topic with a reverse question: Is it possible to derive a preference for a certain leadership style or even a leadership direction or leadership "school" from the popular leadership literature? The guiding question is which leadership books sell the most and which leadership style or elements of leadership they represent. For this purpose, Amazon bestseller lists on the topic of leadership and management in a specific period of time and local market are examined in order to elicit in a quantitative-qualitative study both the distribution of a model and to find out common styles and elements of leadership among different authors. The continuum transactional-transformational is used as a reference model. From this, an inductive conclusion can be drawn as to which leadership model is currently preferred.

The result shows that current popular leadership literature primarily reflects transformational leadership models with elements of transactional management. A certain leadership mindset and special leadership activities such as goal orientation or inspirational motivation can be found in almost all of the most widespread models.