Linking Flexible-Dynamic Team Structures through Distributed Leadership: A Qualitative Evaluation with Single Design Case Approach and Application of Roster Method

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Abstract

Fierce competition in every sector has forced companies to re-design their structures towards being more customer-focused, faster and more responsive. In this vein, there is rising dominance of flexible-dynamic team structures in organizations and these teams are, most of the times, self-managed. Among these team structures, leadership characteristics are not only observed in official team leaders but such characteristics are distributed among team members. The concept of "leading without leaders" has gained scholarly interest and in this paper, aim is to evaluate and combine constructs of distributed leadership and flexible-dynamic team structures within a single design case approach. Local division of a multinational company that operates in luxury cosmetics sector is selected. In-depth interviews were conducted at the company site, and flexible-dynamic team structures were examined in detail. As a second tool, Roster method is applied to see existence and strength of distributed leadership among different departments. Findings supported that organizational structure of this company has become more flexible-dynamic with distributed leadership characteristics seen across all departments. These findings were significant because our selected company entered into Turkey market twice and the second entry has been operationally successful. Arguments are offered regarding differences between two periods and further implications are suggested in relation to adoption of a new and more responsive company structure. Structural changes between two periods constituted the focal point of this research.

Key Words: Distributed leadership, flexible-dynamic teams, Roster method, single design cases

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1. Introduction

Today's competitive business environment forces companies to adapt to emerging complexity if they want to survive and this necessity requires company executives to rethink and redesign corporate structures (e.g. Anupindi et al., 2006; Chang, 2006; Evans and Lindsay, 2005; Gardner, 2004). Organizational structures are major drivers for change because they are skeletons for all organizational decisions and processes (Burns and Stalker, 1961; Scott, 1981; Tsoukas, 1994) and therefore change starts with structural adaptations. Factors such as cost, quality and service encourage companies to seek new ways of doing business via task and organizational structure modifications (Harmon, 2005; 2003). This focus on flow of work within organizations emphasizes a new management paradigm which is referred to and discussed as process based organizations. (e.g. McCormack, 2007; Stanford, 2007).

There have been long lasting debates on whether functionally designed organizations meet customer needs effectively and since organizational structures are based either on function or product, no one is directly involved with processes within organizations (e.g. Earl, 1994; Vanhaverbeke and Torremans, 1998; McCormack, 2007; Stanford, 2007; Madison, 2005; Levi, 2002). Product oriented companies also suffer from the fallacy of orienting customer needs around products and hence, such companies fail to capitalize on customer needs. Inefficiencies of these present structures direct emphasis on process based organizations which is not a new concept (e.g., Lean Thinking, Six Sigma etc.) but is recently suggested to be a new management orientation in place of traditional structures (Crosetto and Macazaga, 2005; Davenport, 1993; Dutta and Manzoni, 1999; Galbraith, 2002; Gardner, 2004; Groth, 1999; Harrington, 1991; Ostroff, 1999; Stalk and Black, 1994).

Even though numerous approaches exist for the implementation of process-based elements within organizations, most of these perspectives lack coherence in terms of guidelines for process-based organizations (Crosetto and Macazaga, 2005). Vanheverbeke and Torremans (1998). There is almost consensus that most effective ways for business process management are related to establishment of process-based teams. Crosetto and Macazaga (2005) argued that process based organizations operate with flexible-dynamic teams because basic characteristic of process based organizations is their ability to change and operate flexibly. Essentially, tasks of flexible-dynamic teams within process based organizations change according to the time and context. This close interaction between process based organizations and flexible-dynamic teams has been acknowledged by many scholars (e.g. Wang and Pervaiz, 2003; Burnes, 2000; Cross, 2000).

In this study, two objectives are followed: first aim is to explore *flexible-dynamic team structures* of the local division of a multinational company operating in luxury cosmetics and via single case approach; findings will reveal and evaluate how these *flexible-dynamic team structures* are implemented. Further insights from single-design case approach supported existence of *flexible-dynamic teams*. Furthermore, it is evidenced that existence of *flexible-dynamic teams* is strengthened by distributed leadership observed dynamics across these teams. Accordingly, following case approach, second attempt is to discuss distributed leadership dynamics across these teams. Core aim was to measure existence and strength of distributed leadership via Roster methodology (Wellman and Berkowitz, 1988) which will be a contribution of

this study. In recent studies, d*istributed leadership* has been reckoned as one of the new paradigms in leadership literature because it assumes that desired leadership characteristics are no more considered to belong to one single person but rather these personal characteristics are distributed among team members who are responsible from certain tasks (e.g. Lau and Murnighan, 2005; Mayo Meindl and Pastor, 2003; Pearce and Conger, 2003; Gronn, 2002). Second contribution of this study is our conceptual discussions on relationships between distributed leadership and flexible-dynamic team structures.

Insights from this study will shed lights on changing paradigms of leadership and team work. Even though it has become a prevailing condition that leaders emerge from any situation, findings from this study will stress out importance of distributed leadership and intra-team dynamics within organizations. Use of Roster method is another contribution of the present study. This method enables participants share their deep insights as there is security for anonymity. Focal company, which operates in luxury cosmetics industry in Turkey for three years and which has experienced many inter and intra organizational changes, is also one of the strengths of this study

2. Background

2.1. Intra-Organizational Networks

Many studies in organization theory and strategy literature emphasize two important functions of intra-organizational networks which are bonding and bridging functions across teams (McCormack, 2007; Stanford, 2007). While bonding refers to intra team information communication flow and operational maintenance, bridging is associated with information flow among departments of the organization (Hope and Reinelt, 2010). In similar veins, many scholars use the terms closure in place of bonding and brokerage to refer to bridging functions of these networks (Burt, 2005). Granovetter (1983) was among the first scholars who argued network dynamics within organizations and he coined the term strong ties for close-networks. He associated the strength of these networks with innovation capability at organizational level and he supported that in strong-network types of organizational structures, radical innovations are less likely to take place. On the contrary, weak network typologies offer avenues for organizational level innovation because innovation, as Granovetter (1983) put forward, breeds from differences in ideas, and differences in networks (McCormack, 2007; Stanford, 2007). Even though strong versus weak ties typologies were not specifically introduced for intra-organizational dynamics, examination of these networks is contributive especially for conceptualization of organizational level innovation dynamics including team structures and other strategic decisions (Hope and Reinelt, 2010).

Employees function different roles within organizational networks. Hope and Reinelt (2010) argued that those who assume bridging roles among different departments are very significant as these employees have many connections and as they hold central positions both within and outside the organizations. Finding and retaining employees with bridging roles in organizational networks is critical and Freeman (1979) offered an approach that detects the centrality of each employee within organizations. With this method, number of connections that an employee has with other networks is analyzed and at the end, a coefficient called betweenness centrality is calculated. A more updated method is introduced by Burke (2005) and via this method; connections of employees to already connected networks are calculated. This coefficient, which is

referred to as network constraint is more encompassing and analytic as compared to betweenness centrality coefficient. Measurement and analyses of intra-organizational network dynamics are essential for adoption and implementation of innovative approaches at organizational level. At individual level, bonding roles strengthen feelings of commitment, attachment among employees while bridging roles provide opportunities for access to new resources, and ease innovative implementations at company level (Burt, 2005). Bonding and bridging roles of employees are also associated with conventional leadership issues such as distributed and network leadership.

2.2. Flexible-Dynamic Team Structures

Intra-organizational teams have been a central topic in organization theory over the last decades. (e.g. Brass, 1985; 1992; Fernandez et al., 1994; 1997; 2000). In some cases, these networks of interest are formed among individuals and in other cases; such interactions are formed across teams within organizations (Ospina and Foldy, 2010; Bryson et al., 2006; Chetkovich and Kunreuther, 2006; Crosby and Kiedrowski, 2008). Empirical analyses of both types of organizational networks have provided valuable insights into the nature and effects of structural characteristics, such as the relative efficiency of knowledge flow through networks with different structures of teams and with different individual characteristics. Accordingly, there is a growing body of research focusing on the team dynamics and processes (Hoppe and Reinelt, 2010). Put in simple terms, teams are also in constant flux with respect to their structural compositions, leader-subordinate relations, objectives pursued and resources utilized. Essentially, static nature of teams has transformed into a dynamic nature and focus of many researchers has channelized on flexible-dynamic team structures.

Even though the term flexible-dynamic team is first introduced by Burt (2005) to underpin the dynamic team processes and continuous interactions among team members; there are many studies that emphasized the importance of flexible and dynamic work team structures (e.g. Kilduff, 1990; Gulati and Gargiulo, 1999; Kilduff and Tsai, 2003). Scholars have started to focus that teams do not last forever and they do not operate in solitude; rather, there is the emergence of flexible-dynamic teams which are formed and structured by diversity of tasks (Balkundi and Kilduff, 2005). As argued by Burt (2005), intra-organizational teams operate in a flexible and dynamic fashion and analysis of flexible-dynamic team structures constituted the first research purpose of this study.

2.3. Theory of Distributed Leadership

Classical leadership theories (e.g. charismatic leadership, transformational leadership) have extensively contributed to our understanding related to employee-manager relations, and various other employee outcomes such as job satisfaction, intentions to leave. Yet, these leadership theories are limited because they are based on the assumptions that teams are managed by one team leader, and that there is top down decision making approach. However, there are limited empirical and conceptual studies that discuss concepts of teams which are managed without leaders or teams with many leaders at the same time (Gronn, 2002; Pearce and Conger, 2003). There is a growing tendency towards formation of teams that are not managed by single and static leaders; according to the nature of tasks and within team dynamics, there can be more than one leader or manager for each team (Mayo et al., 2003; Seibert et al., 2003). The fact that

leadership is distributed among team members has widely been accepted from onwards of 2000's. Defined and discussed as distributed leadership, leadership characteristics are no more vested to one person and work teams are designed to be flexible in terms of decision making authority and task responsibilities (Bennett et al., 2003. Pearce and Sims (2002) proposed a model for distributed leadership and they argued that there are two types of relationships within today's work teams: one of them is vertical type of interactions between manager and team members and the other one is horizontal type of interactions that underlie relationships among team members. Similarly, Day et al., (2002) contented that as roles of team members change, structure of teams becomes flexible-dynamic which characterizes flexibility of team structures according to the nature of tasks. Additionally, many researchers have started to realize possible fit between distributed leadership and flexible-dynamic team structures and they argue that this fit is usually associated with positive corporate outcomes (Lau and Murnighan, 2005; Mayo Meindl and Pastor, 2003). Hope and Reinelt (2010) suggested that success of flexible-dynamic teams is based on the degree to which team members perform different tasks. Accordingly, our second research purpose is related to existence and strength of distributed leadership and it is argued that distributed leadership is associated with flexible-dynamic team structures.

Extant literature offers plethora of studies where distributed leadership, team structures are delineated separately. Yet, scholar interest lacks regarding the extent to which distributed leadership, team dynamics are linked within a single, focal organization. In other words, findings from studies point out that team structures within organizations have become more flexible which might necessitate context-based and emergent leadership. Hence, our research objectives are driven with the purpose of linking changing intra-organization team dynamics with distributed leadership phenomenon. Examination of these research questions will be especially interesting in the context of Turkey which is an emerging economy and where presence of multinational companies gradually becomes more predominant. Theoretical implications from this study will also focus reader attention over changing company culture of multinationals operating in Turkey.

3. Method

Based on rising body of literature on flexible-dynamic team structures and distributed leadership, this study was driven with multi-dimensional research objectives:

Research Objective 1: How are flexible-dynamic team structures implemented at organizational levels?

Research Objective 2: How is distributed leadership associated with flexible-dynamic team structures?

Research Objective 3: How can we measure the existence as well as strength of distributed leadership across flexible-dynamic teams?

For the illumination of research objective 1, in-depth interviews at the local division of a multinational company were conducted. Steps of structured interviews within single design case analysis approach (Yin, 2003) were followed. For the evaluation of research objectives 2 and 3, Roster method was applied where (Wellman and Berkowitz, 1988) including all employees from our select focal company. Findings

from Roster method enabled us to evaluate evidence of distributed leadership across flexible-dynamic teams.

3.1. Single Design Case Analysis

In this study, single case approach was implemented in order to deepen our understanding related to changing intra-group dynamics and distributed leadership. As supported by Lin (2003), case studies provide enriched insights to the "why" and "how" questions of the research and strengthen conceptual frameworks. Case studies can be exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory and this study can be considered as both exploratory and explanatory. It is exploratory in that aim is to understand changing intra-group dynamics and it is explanatory in the sense that evaluation of the causal links between distributed leadership and changing intra-group dynamics in work settings constituted one of the central tenants of the study.

Another important issue for case analyses is the decision to adopt single- or multiple-case designs. Yin (2003) stated that case studies can be single vs. multiple or embedded (multiple levels of analysis) vs. holistic (single-level of analysis). Even though multiple case designs are better qualitative approaches for construct validation and theory development (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007) and for replication logic (Yin, 2003), single case design was adopted and our sampling unit was chosen carefully so that case based conclusions and theoretical implications can be made.

Single case designs are common analysis tools especially in applied psychology, in industrial and organizational behavior research avenues (e.g. Journal of Applied Behavioral Analysis, Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology). Single treatment case approaches are also utilized in experimental designs (e.g. Barlow and Hayes, 1979; Hayes, 1981) and use of these approaches provide more depth insights into the matter (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). Unique and extreme single cases are also more useful for construct validation and for theory support.

Accordingly, Turkey division of a multinational company is chosen as unit of analyses. Researchers had predetermined criteria for our choice and they were as follows: The first selection criterion was that the chosen company should have had team-structure because core aim was analyze flexible-dynamic team structures within an organizational structure; the second and most important criterion was that the company operations should have exemplified extreme and unique aspects. In other words, there should have been a story behind the operations of our chosen company. The fact that company entered into Turkey market twice (the first entry was in 2002 and second entry was in 2008) captured our attention. There were observable operational differences between the two periods and researchers attempted to analyze reflections of such changes on company structure.

Key informants in the company were reached via official requests and after obtaining the permissions to conduct the case analyses at company site, procedure and appointments were made in collaboration with divisional managers. This company operates in luxury retail-cosmetics industry and is the retail leader across Europe. Division of Turkey was first founded in 2002 however due to financial crises and wrong-location choices, company exited Turkey market. In 2008, they re-entered Turkey market with a different concept and location choice. In the remainder of the paper, first entry is referred as as Period 1 and second entry as Period 2. As of 2011,

number of stores is fourteen and officially, company executives disclose their profitable growth objectives. Exploiting and evaluating the differences in corporate strategies between the first and second entry formulated the basic research question behind our case approach. Time allocated for data collection was between May and June 2011 and all data were collected on time, with strict confidentiality. Only the researchers of this study participated during case analyses.

3.2. Data Collection

In case analysis, multiple methods of data collection increase the validity of findings (Eisenhard, 1989; Yin, 2003). In this study, interviews and observations constituted main tools and data were collected via analysis of internal documents and web sites. In order to increase the validity of our constructs and the proposed relationships, triangulation of research was followed; namely, single-design case and Roster Method were applied (Eisenhardt, 1989).

Our most important data source was in-depth interviews that were administered personally. These interviews were conducted at the company site and in each case, the interviewer contacted with the key informant. The group of informants was composed of managers of finance, sales and marketing departments. There are no other departments in the company and hence; interviews were structured and a pre-determined procedure was followed with all of the key informants. They were kindly invited to talk about the differences pertaining to process improvements, team work structures and managerial job descriptions between the first entry (2002) and second entry into Turkey market (2008). After the general questions, the informants were given chance to describe the situation in their own way and they were asked to construct their own interpretation as suggested by Carrier (1996). The protocols that are used during the interviews are available in Appendix A. The average interview time is thirty minutes, within a range from twenty minutes to seventy five minutes. The data collection period lasted for approximately three months (between May 2011 and June 2011). A semi-structured interview process was followed and our key informants were asked questions related to changes in process improvements, team work structures and managerial job descriptions. Divisional managers were chosen because they were present in both of the entries. Interviews with each manager lasted for about an hour and they were willing to share all information pertaining to changes in structure and strategies.

Table 1 In-Depth Interview Findings

	Finance Manager	Sales Manager	Marketing Manager
Changes in Process Improvements between Period 1 and Period 2	1. Better Location Choice 2. Decreased headquarter pressure 3. Decision making authority given to local managers	1. Depth knowledge on Turkey market 2. Changes in pricing policies 3. Increase in decision making authority of managers	1. Market opportunities in Turkey developed 2. Local managers were given more authority 3. Appropriate location choice
Changes in Team Work between Period 1 and Period 2	1. Inter-departmental projects 2. Increase in rotation 3. Depth evaluation of within team work environment	1. Team work training 2. Identification of team managers as team leaders 3. Rotation among various departments	1. Inter-departmental projects 2. Performance evaluation at team basis 3. Periodic rotation
Changes in Manager Job Descriptions between Period 1 and Period 2	1. Gaining knowledge on products 2. Determination of sales quotas with department managers 3. Working temporarily stores	1. Identification of departmental costs 2. Expense controlling 3. Temporary reporting among departments	1. Controlling of advertising expenses 2. Rotation in finance department 3. Temporary store assignments

Findings from in-depth interviews were subjected to NiVO 8. The statements were purified and the irrelevant ones from the content of this study were removed. After purification stage, we categorized statements from key informants into "changes in process improvements", "team work changes", and "managerial job description changes". In terms of process improvements between Period 1 and Period 2, the commonly referred change was *increased decision making authority given to the local units*. Stated differently, pressures from headquarters decreased. Location choice, pricing and other Turkey related domestic factors were left to the discretion of managers in Turkey. Regarding the team structures, significant changes were observed: The most important change was *introduction of rotation and inter-department project opportunities* (For examples of changes in team structures, please refer to Table 2). Communication among different departments increased between Period 1 and Period 2. Most referred example was the project that aimed to educate all employees from different departments. Additionally, employees and department managers used to be assigned to different departments in certain periods so that everyone had knowledge about the whole structure of organization. Discussions from in-depth interviews also revealed that job descriptions of managers were modified to support inter-department coordination. It is common among department managers to work in stores and get to know customers. Interviews findings emphasized that success from Period 1 to Period 2 was mainly due to transformation of rigid and central focused nature of company into dynamic-flexible team oriented structure in 2008. Information regarding the findings of in-depth interviews is provided in Table 2 with details.

Most significant insight derived in terms of operational processes was that local managers had more discretion regarding pricing, location and so on. Nature of teams also changed and it was seen that projects across teams increased with rotation opportunities. An important implication obtained from interviews was that responsibilities of managers extended to include tasks related to other departments. Managers were required to work in other departments, and be knowledgeable about the whole process of operations.

Our first research objective was related to investigation of team structures of our sample company regarding two entry periods. The changes in team structures between two periods were investigated and findings underpinned that teams became more flexible and dynamic as compared to first entry. In line with team-structures and process-based organizations literature; use of local decision making discretion, extension of managerial responsibilities and rise in across-team work integrations resulted in successful operational activities for our sample company from onwards of 2008 (e.g. number of stores more than tripled since 2008 with key street stores opened in central locations of Istanbul).

As argued by Burt (2005), and supported in studies of Balkundi and Kilduff (2005); there is a close partnership between flexible-dynamic team structures and distributed leadership. Teams operate effectively when tasks are performed by team members who undertake different responsibilities and who act as leaders, regarding the nature of task and timing. Henceforth, based on extant studies in literature, it is argued that success of flexible-dynamic team structures depends on existence and strength of distributed leadership. For this purpose, Roster method was applied to evaluate existence and strength of distributed leadership across teams.

Use of Roster method enabled us to avoid social desirability biases common in surveys and it was helpful in unfolding the implicit leadership schemas of employees regarding distributed leadership. Additionally, definition of an effective leader is prone to subjectivity and lacks a coherent understanding among scholars, so during the administration process, our key informants were not provided with any clues regarding who could constitute an effective leader. All in all, high internal reliability and objectivity achieved from use of Roster method, led us to the second step of this research.

3.3. Roster Approach

Insights from the interviews emphasized that major change observed in company structure of our sampling unit was the adoption and support of flexible-dynamic team environment. Interactions among departments increased and rotation was strengthened. Pressures from headquarter operations decreased which was another indication of local decision delivery authority. In such team structures, distributed leadership is usually seen and with Roster approach, researchers attempted to evaluate and reveal distributed team leadership in chosen sample unit.

Wellman and Berkowitz (1988) developed an approach based on listing methodology. Defined as Roster approach, this method is designed to test and validate implicit and schematic thoughts of individuals. Following in-depth interviews, Roster method with all employees in finance (four employees), sales (nine employees) and marketing departments (eleven employees) was followed and in overall, our sample unit was composed of twenty four employees including department managers. The

participants were provided with a list including all the names from these three departments.

They were asked to write down the names of people "who they consider to be effective leaders" excluding themselves and including their department managers. We did not give any additional information regarding what is meant by an effective leader and with this approach, aim was to reveal the leadership-related schemas in minds of our participants (Lord and Maher, 1991; Meindl, 1993). Lists gathered from participants were analyzed on two-matrix bases: For instance, if participant "A" defined and determined participant "B" as a potential leader, we researchers grouped this cell as "AB" and named it as 1; otherwise 0. Underlying purpose of this method is to determine the network typology within a flexible-dynamic system approach. Netdraw 1.48 as used to analyze the leadership matrices.

In order to evaluate and analyze the lists, two outsider participants who were familiar with the subject and with the method joined us. Their task was to categorize listings of participants under "distributed leadership" and "non-distributed leadership" categories. With "non-distributed leadership" the classical management style was meant which is based on functionalist view and hierarchy. In this perspective, there are defined roles for everyone within the team and proved otherwise, rigid system of teams is maintained and respected for a long time. Inter-rater agreement between these two participants was 92% (Cohen, 1987).

Table 2 Findings for Distributed Leadership after Roster Analyses

Possible Leader	Department	Chosen as Leader by
1 Employee as Leader	Finance Department	Selected by 9 Employees
2 Employees as Leaders	Sales Department	1. Leader Selected by 13 Employees
		2. Leader Selected by 9 Employees
3 Employees as Leaders	Marketing Department	1. Leader Selected by 17 Employees
		2. Leader Selected by 14 Employees
		3. Leader Selected by 7 Employees

In the finance department, one employee, other than the department manager, was considered to be a leader. In the sales department, two employees were seen as leaders; the first one of them was rated as leader by thirteen employees and second one was rated and selected to be a leader by nine employees. In line with our expectations, three employees were considered to be leaders in marketing department; the first one was rated by seventeen employees, the second one was selected by fourteen employees and the third one was chosen to be a leader by seven employees. Findings from this approach validated the existence of distributed leadership across all departments of the company (please refer to Table 3 Roster Findings)

4. Discussions and Conclusions

Distributed leadership has received interests of researchers in parallel to the rise of conventional leadership theories (e.g. implicit leadership, charismatic and transformational leadership). In many of these theories and empirical investigations, the concept of distributed leadership is analyzed and perspective of contingency in leadership is associated with distributed leadership. Essentially, contingent leadership (e.g. Yun et al., 2005; Yammarino et al., 1997) is very similar to distributed leadership because positions of managers or leaders are no more static; according to the time, nature of task and process of the organization, managers shift tasks and shift their positions. Put in practical terms, there is rising dominance of flexibility among team leadership positions and for instance, it is common to observe cross functional and cross departmental assignments. Such practices not only strengthen the flexibility of organizational structure but also enrich the work characteristics such as autonomy, skill variety, task significance, task identity, and feedback (Hackman and Oldham, 1980).

Our first objective in this study was to analyze the organizational structure of Turkey division of a multinational company. This company was unique and proved to be a good choice for single-case analysis approach because they entered Turkey market twice (in 2002 and in 2008) both of which were managed with different operational and strategic objectives. After having conducted in-depth interviews with department managers of the company, valuable insights were obtained into the operational structure and changes realized between 2002 which corresponds to first entry into Turkey market and 2008 that is the latest and most successful entry.

In-depth interviews revealed three important structural changes pertaining to dynamic-flexible organization characteristics. The first category was related to process improvements between 2002 and 2008. Decisions were delivered on local basis; domestic choices such as location and pricing fell within local authorities all of which reflect process based and dynamic structure organizations. As supported in studies of Fribourg (2000), Garner (2004), Vanheverbeke and Torremans (1998), Ostroff (1999) and in many others, companies focus on business processes and gradually functional organizations are replaced by process organizations. In such organizations, fit between structure and processes is the essential point and this fit enables company structure to be more flexible, adaptive, and responsive than traditional ones (Spanyi, 2003; Becker Kugeler and Roseman, 2003). These organizations manage and respond to change more effectively (Gardner, 2004) and hence, such organizational structures offer a more powerful environment for exploiting the power of processes and resources (Gardner, 2004). It can be argued that successful operations of our sample company are due to adoption of a process-based structure in 2008 because local dynamics were managed proactively and with full resource utilization. Individualization of products, local decisions regarding location and pricing, increased authority in key marketing and sales projects are some of the examples that align with customer-focused aspects of process organizations.

The second category revealed in our in-depth interviews was related to enhanced team working environment. Organizational behavior literature is full of theoretical and practical evidence emphasizing importance of team works in organizations. Team works replace traditional unit based systems and enable flow of knowledge exchange via rotations, cross functional projects, and so on. Some practical adaptations of supportive

team work structure in our sample unit were increased opportunities of rotations, inter-team and intra-team projects. In line with studies that linked team work structures with successful organizational performance, it is argued argue that increased rotations, increased intra and inter team projects strengthen the satisfaction employees derive out of their tasks and therefore breed the profitable organizational outcomes. Lastly, it is also observed that job descriptions of managers were extended to include tasks of other departments (e.g. marketing manager being included in rotation for finance department; finance manager working in stores temporarily and so on). Job descriptions of managers became more inclusive, flexible and such a change is a direct reflection of process based organizational structures. From top to down, structure led to changes in team structures at group level, and this change is associated with individual level changes regarding employee job descriptions.

This study made certain contributions to our understanding of distributed leadership and process based organizations. First of all, this study was an attempt to analyze intra organization dynamics of local division of a multinational company and in-depth interviews revealed unique findings regarding changes between two periods. With Roster method, leadership dynamics of teams within this organization were evaluated and use of this for analyses of distributed leadership was an important methodological contribution. Roster method also enabled us to see how perspectives of individuals are different from each other and how these different perspectives form teams. Employees possess their own internal strategies and they internalize these strategies in their own teams hence, an inter-organizational network of flexible-dynamic teams is established. Essentially, Foster method helped us to gain a holistic approach among teams of our sample company while analyzing the distributed leadership characteristics.

Implicit leadership is a research avenue that stands in the intersection of organizational behavior and psychology. While aspects related to effective leadership are within borders of organizational behavior, process of defining an effective leader that includes mental schemas and metaphors is in the avenue of psychology. In this vein, it is argued that measurement of implicit leadership has been both challenging and troublesome for scholars. Since it is related to mental schemas, cognitions and metaphors of individuals; analysis of these mental schemas is challenging. Additionally, development of scales on implicit leadership is troublesome because scale validated in a sample may prove quite different in another sample set just because of subjectivity of mental schemas and metaphors individuals use for defining their leaders. In this study, Roster approach was implemented to evaluate the existence and strength of implicit leadership across different teams and implementation of this approach enabled us To combine constructs of flexible-dynamic team structures with implicit leadership, To derive insights of all team members within all department and o avoid social desirability and bias effects which are common fallacies of survey tools. As in all studies, limitations were inevitable and they should be noted. The first limitation was related to use of single design case approach. In-depth interviews were conducted with managers of all departments at the company site and conclusions were reached based on insights from a single company analysis. Therefore, generalizations from a single case design were not possible. However as noted by Yin (2003) case studies are not designed and conducted to make generalizations but to enrich theoretical contributions.

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