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Leadership Style and Organizational Performance of Media in Kerala

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ABSTRACT

Leadership behaviour plays a crucial role in influencing the level of employee performance and the overall organizational output. Organizations cannot survive, or at best, they cannot reach the apex of success without a proper leadership style. Leadership is a prerequisite for good performance and a better competitive edge in many industries, including the media. Leadership in the media field is incredibly critical due to the unique and creative nature of this industry. Its staff members are creative individuals who transform ideas into media products such as news stories, features, investigative reports, articles, interviews, and television shows. Therefore, the fit leadership style is essential for managing the media firms rightly. The media plays a vital role in a democratic country. There can be no genuine democracy in the world without media freedom. Democracy happens when the government is selected based on the consent of the public. Therefore, the media can inform the public, reveal information, and guide them to elect their leaders. The media is an integral source of information, and it is crucial for contributing to a democratic society and good governance. The media industry is a mixture of diverse media activities such as publishing and broadcasting. This industry consists of the broadcasting industry in the form of television and radio, the print industry in the form of newspapers and magazines, and the film and recorded music industry. The press, television, and radio are referred to as the mass media. This is so due to the fact their reach to the audience is vast. They transmit the messages to the masses in a fast manner, particularly the electronic media. Mass media's functions centre on information, entertainment, and interpretation of events, bonding, or bringing people together. This article throws light towards the leadership style and organizational performance of media in Kerala

Keywords: Leadership behaviour, organizational performance, leadership style.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership behaviour plays a crucial role in influencing the level of employee performance and the overall organizational output. Organizations cannot survive, or at best, they cannot reach the apex of success without a proper leadership style. Leadership is a prerequisite for good performance and a better competitive edge in many industries, including the media. Leadership in the media field is incredibly critical due to the unique and creative nature of this industry. Its staff members are creative individuals who transform ideas into media products such as news stories, features, investigative reports, articles, interviews, and television shows. Therefore, the fit leadership style is essential for managing the media firms rightly.

Whether positive or negative, the performance of staff will reflect on the organizational performance of media firms. Journalists, creators, designers, photographers, and other staff members involved in the production chain in a media firm are professionals who have invested most of their time developing their careers and have used their abilities to acquire knowledge (Tadie (1984)). The success of a media organization cannot happen in the absence of suitable leadership. The appropriate direction is essential for a successful media firm. The staff members in media firms face obstacles while carrying out their duties, and they endeavour to overcome difficulties as much as they can. However, when they do not feel the support of their managerial leadership, their enthusiasm tends to plummet. Such a matter does hurt the performance of the organization as a whole.

Oring & Danko (1995) stated that the Newspaper Association of America (NAA) surveyed more than 2,600 newspaper journalists who left their jobs to know the factors that led to employee turnover. The finding was that it was not stress or long hours of work that led to staff turnover. Instead, the study found that employees left newspapers due to low morale, lack of advancement, and perceived inequities in pay and promotions. Therefore, it is evident that such problems are manageable and preventable. The media leadership can play a significant role to avert the occurrence of such issues.

Media management revolves around four vital steps: content creation, content delivery, content sale, and user interaction. Therefore, the best resources or facilities would be of no benefit if the leader cannot make journalists, photographers, producers, directors, and scriptwriters generate attractive products (Aris and Bughin (2005)). The media is an industry of people, which means the people are the salient asset that keeps the media organization operating. Presently, the media industry rivalry has intensified as the entry barriers have weakened due to the massive use of the Internet and social media platforms. Although access to information and news has become comfortable in the Internet era, traditional media remain appealing, including newspapers and television channels. The presence of traditional media has not eroded.

The media industry has distinct characteristics. Lavine and Walkman (1998) highlighted four features that differentiate the media from other sectors. These characteristics are (a) highly creative employees, (b) perishable commodities, (c) social roles, and (d) structural organizations. As the media has unique features, it also has unique challenges. The media and entertainment industry has five challenges that repeatedly happen (Caves (2000)). These challenges are (a) complying with three points of view (consumers, authors, and advertisers), (b) volatility, (c) negotiation with local and international markets, (d) managing products whose useful life is short, and (e) balancing the financial results with the social objectives. Moreover, three more challenges can happen concerning workers, owners, and regulators. These three parties will raise different requirements (Pérez et al. (2006)). Workers will require better working conditions, benefits, and reasonable payment, while owners prioritize obtaining better profits on their investments. Simultaneously, regulating bodies will demand that the organization abide by established rules.

One fundamental characteristic that distinguishes media leaders is skill management. The employee turnover in media organizations tends to be high, and only leaders with great people management skills can prevent such issues. An editor needs to have two essential elements to be a good leader (Giles (1995)). First, the editor should understand the behaviour of people and the relevant knowledge of the sector. Second, the editor should have the ability to predict behaviour patterns to enable him to comprehend and anticipate why employees act or are inclined to behave in a particular way.

While newspapers and television channels are both offering news and entertainment to the audience, the production cycle of both is not the same. Kung (2008) proposed two business models for newspapers and television channels. In the case of newspapers, the production cycle goes through six stages, and these are (a) content creation, (b) editing, (c) production, (d) printing, (e) Distribution, sales and (f) Customer service.

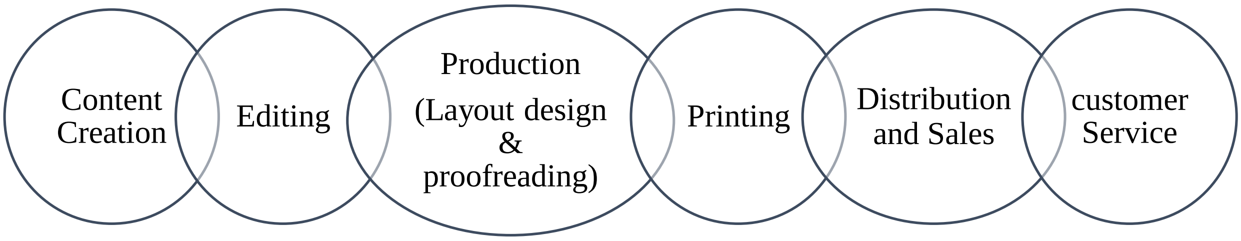

Figure - Business Model of Newspapers
Source: Kung (2008)

However, the production process in the case of television channels is different. The process is contingent on three stages, namely content creation, scheduling, and distribution.

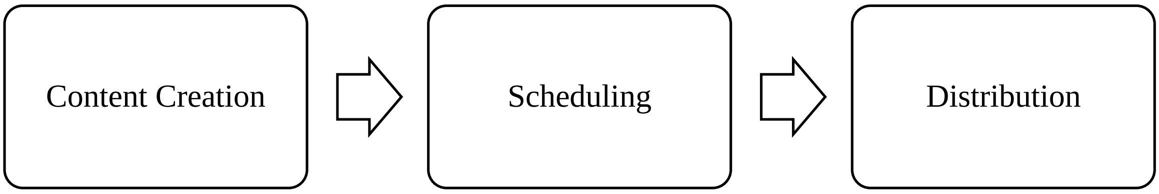

Figure -Business Model of Television channels
Source: Kung (2008)

The media industry has been flourishing in India, including Kerala State. Over one lakh newspapers and 885 television channels have been registered nationwide. Kerala is accommodating a considerable number of channels and newspapers, and it is one of the pioneering states in terms of the media industry. In Kerala's context, no research has been devoted for studying media's organizational performance and investigating the interface between leadership and performance.

Newspapers in Kerala

Kerala has the highest literacy rate in India, and the level of newspaper consumption is one of the largest nationwide. The newspaper has been an essential source of information and news dissemination in the state.

Jeffery (2000) indicated that the development of print media in Kerala went through three stages. The first was the rarity stage between 1600-1870 when the printing press was existing but was exclusive. The second stage was called the scarce stage, which happened between 1870 and 1970. In this stage, newspapers and periodicals went into circulation, but it was insufficient. The third was the mass stage when the newspapers became available and accessible to the public.

Kerala witnessed the publication of the first newspaper in June 1847, according to Kerala Press Academy (1999). A Christian missionary group of German origin started publishing the newspaper named 'Rajyasamacharam,' which focused on religious matters and intended to promote the Christian faith. The newspaper was published from Thalassery in Kannur district.

TV Channels in Kerala

The television industry has been growing non-stop since the first launch of television in India in 1959. It was impossible to watch television 24 hours a day or seven days a week when India saw the launch of television for the first time. Programs related to community health, traffic, citizens' duties, and rights were just broadcast twice a week. In 1972, the television industry witnessed a considerable expansion of broadcasts when the second television station kicked off in Bombay. More stations began broadcasting in 1973 in Srinagar and Amritsar, besides others in Lucknow, Calcutta, and Madras in 1975.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The media industry in India has made tremendous growth over the last ten years. The number of media outlets, including newspapers and television channels, has exponentially gone up. Nowadays, Kerala is among the Indian states that have witnessed a rapid proliferation of newspapers and television channels since early 2000. The advent and rise of technology have led to an explosive growth of media outlets. While technology has transformed the media landscape, organizational leadership remains crucial in directing media firms' performance.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

An extensive review of the literature led to the formulation of the following objectives:

1. To find out the prevalent leadership style adopted by managers of print and visual media in Kerala.
2. To evaluate the organizational performance of print and visual media in Kerala.

g3. To examine the relationship between the leadership style and organizational performance in Kerala's print and visual media.

Hypotheses

The in-depth review of the literature led this study to have the following hypotheses:

H10: There is no difference in the perception of Kerala's print and visual media employees regarding the adopted leadership style in the workplace.

H20: There is no difference in the perception of Kerala's print and visual media managers regarding organizational performance.

H30: There is no positive relationship between transactional leadership style and organizational performance of print and visual media in Kerala.

H40: There is no positive relationship between the transformational leadership style and organizational performance of print and visual media in Kerala.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study is descriptive-cum-analytical in nature. It examines the linkage between leadership behaviour and organizational performance in Kerala's print and visual media. It also seeks to determine the influence of corporate vision on performance and whether it mediates the relationship between leadership and performance. Additionally, it aims to describe the performance of print and visual media in Kerala. The researcher employed structured Likert-style questionnaires and sent them to employees and editors/managers operating in the selected newspapers and television channels in Kerala. The researcher adopted the multi-stage stratified random sampling and randomly selected 30 newspapers and 15 television channels from three districts in Kerala. The selection of the three districts was determined on the basis of the lottery sampling method. The total number of sampled media headquarters and bureaus is 45. The appropriate sample size was determined with the help of the Cockran formula.

Relationship between Leadership and Performance

Howes (2015) stated that the most indicative of the long-term success of an organization is leadership. Leaders' task is to set up the appropriate strategies, allocate resources, create the business models, develop and align the workforce, and ensure the resources' availability. The final decisions taken by the leaders can either drive or impede performance. In the absence of leadership, there would not be a well-defined vision for the organization, which will naturally impact its progress. Sound leadership also makes employees feel secure about their jobs and very confident about their future. A sense of unity and passion for work can be developed among workers only by effective leadership (Dayanandan (2015).

Hambrink and Mason 1984 stress the importance of looking at individual firms to assess the impact of leadership. Their view is that an organization becomes a reflection of its managers who act based on their incomplete and filtered understanding of a situation. They argued that the characteristics of the top team matter far more than those of individual CEOs. Thus, knowledge of top management groups' experiences, motives, values, and characteristics would enhance understanding of leadership's effects. More writers support the idea of seeking the impact of leadership on performance in individual firms. Collins (2001) identified a typical leadership behaviour pattern in those large organizations spectacularly transforming from being good performance to great performance.

Distribution of Managers by their response on Objective Performance Parameter elements along with mean score and test of significance

Items		Response					Mean	S.D.	One-sample t-test with test value 3	
		Very Low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High			t	Sig.
The market share in the last three years	n	67	130	72	56	23	2.53	1.16	-7.457	0.000
	%	19.25	37.36	20.69	16.09	6.61				
The net profit in the last three years	n	56	123	85	56	28	2.65	1.17	-5.656	0.000
	%	16.09	35.34	24.43	16.09	8.05				
The advertisement sales growth in the last three years	n	39	133	70	67	39	2.81	1.20	-2.949	0.003
	%	11.21	38.22	20.11	19.25	11.21				

Source: Primary Data

The mean opinion score of managers about the market share over the last three years is 2.53, which is significantly lower than the mean of the response scale as the significance level of t-value is less than 0.05. The result indicates that the market share of media organizations is below the average level. Among the three elements of financial performance, the highest mean score of 2.81 is for the level of advertisement sales growth in the last three years. The second-highest score of 2.65 is for the level of net profit in the last three years. The lowest score of 2.53 is for the level of the market share over the last three years. From the result, it can be inferred that the highest mean is for the level of advertisement sales growth, followed by the level of net profit in the last three years. The lowest element is the level of market share.

Descriptive statistics of the composite variable representing the level of Objective Performance parameter

Statistics	Values	One-sample t-test with test value 3	
		T	Sig.
Mean	2.66	-5.788	0.000
Median	2.33		
S.D.	1.08		
Skewness	0.43		
Kurtosis	-0.75		
Minimum	1.00		
Maximum	5.00		

Source: Primary Data

The scores of the three elements of the objective performance were combined by taking the arithmetic mean to form a composite variable representing its extent of prevalence. Table presents the descriptive statistics of the score of financial performance dimension in the sampled organizations. The table shows that the mean score of financial performance in the sampled organizations is 2.66, with a standard deviation of 1.08. As per the one-sample t-test, the mean score is lower than the mean of the response scale, indicating that this financial performance in the sampled media organizations is below the average level. As the median value of the score is very close to the mean value and the absolute values of skewness and kurtosis are much lower than their threshold value of 2.5, the result indicates that this financial performance indicator is almost normally distributed in the sampled organizations. The scores range from a minimum value of 1.00 to a maximum value of 5.00.

The difference in the Perception of Print and Visual Media Managers regarding the Organizational Performance

Table illustrates the difference in the perception of Kerala's print and visual media managers with regard to the parameters of organizational performance. The managers have shown differing and similar perceptions with respect to the performance indicators. In the first indicator, there is a significant difference in the perception of print and visual media managers with a significance level of 0.005. Moreover, the perception of managers with respect to the technological parameter also shows a significant difference of 0.001. The mean in visual media is 3.87, which is higher than that of the mean of print media.

Descriptive statistics of the perception of sampled managers regarding organizational performance in print and visual media in Kerala

Performance Parameters	Print Media		Visual Media		T	Sig.
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Employee Parameter	3.71	0.62	3.51	0.50	2.815	0.005

Technological Parameter	3.66	0.55	3.87	0.42	-3.44	0.001
Ethical Parameter	3.71	0.71	3.73	0.56	-0.311	0.756
Editorial Parameter	3.19	0.55	3.15	0.51	0.587	0.558
Corporate Governance	3.78	0.62	3.71	0.40	0.962	0.337
Engagement with Audience	3.84	0.83	3.67	0.68	1.818	0.070
Business Customer Parameter	3.07	0.68	3.28	0.53	-2.621	0.009
Objective Performance	2.23	0.80	3.82	0.87	-16.226	0.000
Organizational Performance	2.90	0.45	3.69	0.48	-14.314	0.000

Source: Primary Data

The results in the table indicate that there is no significant difference with regard to the ethical dimension. Similarly, the managers' perception was not different with respect to the editorial parameter, corporate governance parameter, engagement with the audience parameter. In addition, the print and visual media managers show a difference in their perception of the business customer parameter. There is a significant difference in their perception about the financial performance as the mean in the visual media is 3.82 while it is just 2.23 in the print media. This means the financial performance of the visual media is better than in the print media. This result points to the revenue-generating challenges print media faces in line with the availability of alternative sources for accessing the news from social media platforms or the Internet. The decline of print media revenue can also be attributed to the floods calamity and Covid-19 pandemic. For example, media houses in Kerala depend on the Onam festival for generating advertising revenue which forms about 40-50% of the total annual sales (Amin & Saxena (2019). Print media encounters a number of challenges, such as e-newspapers, increasing internet penetration even in rural areas, and the rising cost of newsprint (Mudgal (2020).

Overall, there is a significant difference in print and visual media performance at a significance level of 0.000. The overall mean of the organizational performance in the visual media is 3.69, while it is 2.90 in the print media. It can be inferred the organizational performance of visual media seems to be higher than the print media print. Thus, the result rejects the **null hypothesis** that there is no significant difference in the perception of print and visual media managers with regard to organizational performance.

Descriptive statistics of the composite variable representing the level of Organizational Performance

Statistics	Values	One-sample t-test with test value 3	
		T	Sig.
Mean	3.11	3.657	0.000
Median	3.04		
S.D.	0.58		
Skewness	0.28		
Kurtosis	-0.63		
Minimum	1.71		
Maximum	4.45		

Source: Primary Data

The scores of the elements of the organizational performance were combined by taking the arithmetic mean to form a composite variable representing its extent of prevalence. Table presents the descriptive statistics of the score of organizational performance dimension in the sampled organizations. The table shows that the mean score of organizational performance is 3.11, with a standard deviation of 0.58. As per the one-sample t-test, the mean score is significantly higher than the mean of the response scale, indicating that organizational performance in the sampled media organizations is above the average level. As the median value of the score is very close to the mean value and the absolute values of skewness and kurtosis are much lower than their threshold value of 2.5, the result indicates that organizational performance is almost normally distributed in the sampled organizations. The scores range from a minimum value of 1.71 to a maximum value of 4.45.

Coefficients of the final regression model of the relationship between transformational leadership style and organizational performance

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	VIF
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	3.269	0.247		13.248	0.000	
Transformational Leadership	0.150	0.063	0.101	2.367	0.019	1.027
M: 1 if Print, 0 otherwise	-0.778	0.056	-0.596	-13.997	0.000	1.026
A2: 1 if 31 to 40, 0 otherwise	-0.088	0.037	-0.101	-2.408	0.017	1.002

Source: Primary Data

Table presents the coefficients of the final regression model. The table shows that the regression coefficient of the variable representing transformational leadership is 0.150. The result indicates that the extent of transformational leadership increases by one unit, the organizational performance increases by 0.150 units. From the result, it can be inferred that transformational leadership significantly augments the organizational performance of media firms. The regression coefficient of the dummy variable representing age is -0.088, indicating a relationship between organizational performance and the age group of employees.

From the above results, it can be concluded that transformational leadership has a significant positive influence on organizational performance. Hence the result rejects the **null hypothesis** that there is no positive relationship between transformational leadership style and organizational performance of print and visual media in Kerala. The result accepts the **alternative hypothesis** that there is a positive relationship between transformational leadership style and organizational performance of print and visual media in Kerala.

The leader's role is crucial to improving the performance, professionalism, and competitiveness of the staff members in the newsroom (Goyanes & Gentile (2018). They also say that the importance of the media leader is considerable since he/she guides, gives advice, and stimulates in a way that is not invasive or coercive in any case. Transformational leadership works to enhance the development of followers, pushing to think in a novel way, inspiring them to achieve beyond what they thought was possible, and encouraging them to keep in mind the values and high moral standards that guide their performance (Avolio (1999).

Coefficients of the final regression model of the relationship between vision and organizational performance

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	VIF
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	3.344	0.175		19.144	0.000	
Organizational Vision	0.131	0.043	0.127	3.041	0.003	1.000
M: 1 if Print, 0 otherwise	-0.802	0.055	-0.615	-14.684	0.000	1.001
A2: 1 if 31 to 40, 0 otherwise	-0.086	0.036	-0.099	-2.355	0.019	1.001

Source: Primary Data

Table presents the coefficients of the final regression model. From the table, it can be seen that the regression coefficient of the variable representing the vision is 0.131. The result indicates that the extent of vision increases by one unit, the organizational performance increases by 0.131 units. From the result, it can be inferred that the vision significantly augments organizational performance.

From the above results, it can be concluded that the vision has a significant positive influence on the organizational performance of the print and visual media in Kerala. Hence, the result rejects the null hypothesis that there is no positive relationship between organizational vision and organizational performance of print and visual media in Kerala. It accepts the alternative hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between organizational vision and organizational performance of print and visual media in Kerala.

This result conforms with previous studies' findings. Organization's mission and vision showed a significant proportion of variance in organizational performance (Jonyo & Ouma (2018). For every one-unit change in the organization's mission and vision, organizational performance increases by 0.867, indicating the positive impact of the organization's mission and vision on organizational performance (Jonyo & Ouma (2018). The vision, goal, and mission have a positive and meaningful impact on organizational performances. Other previous studies also stated that strategy formulation was positively affected organizational performance (David (2003, Daft (2006), Franklin (2013).

CONCLUSION

The researcher has used the relevant statistical tools to analyse the data in this chapter. Among the tools that have been used are the t-test, ANOVA, MANOVA, regression analysis, and the Sobel test. With the help of SPSS, the hypotheses were tested, and their status, whether accepted or rejected, was stated. This analysis has answered all the research questions posed in the first chapter. It has provided an in-depth interpretation of the outcomes of the data analysis. The subsequent chapter presents a summary of the study findings in addition to the conclusion and suggestions.

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