
Leadership Styles in the Top Greek Media Companies: Leading People with a Mixed Style



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Media companies are different from manufactures and other commercial organizations. They have both measurable economic goals and nonmeasurable social responsibilities. Leading these companies is a difficult task. The main issue is that an appropriate leadership style for media people must balance business and political goals. In this study, semi-structured interviews were used to collect data about Greek media leaders. The research explores and identifies the leadership style of CEOs heading the top media companies in Greece. These findings indicate that media leaders use a mixed leadership style involving both transformational and transactional styles in order to anticipate the peculiar external and internal media environment.

Every organizational level and department is structured around groups of subordinates acting under the control and guidance of leaders. This situation comprises a dynamic process by which staff members are empowered to work together toward a common goal in order to bring about significant beneficial changes and transform institutions (Astin & Leland, 1991). The organization's leader directs employees and influences their action toward achieving organizational purposes (Rauch & Behling, 1984). In an attempt to indicate the major determinants of leadership effectiveness, Wills (1996) asserts that since leadership constitutes a reciprocal process occurring between human beings, its effectiveness is inevitably dependant upon the relationship between the leader and her/his followers, and highly determined by the leadership style; the latter could be defined as the way in which individuals in positions of authority choose to exert influence and power on their subordinates (Gırlı & Topcu Oraz, 2004; Rosenfeld & Wilson, 1999).

The main objective of this study is to offer an insight into the characteristics of the leadership style in the top Greek media companies. The paper consists of five sections. Following the brief introduction, the literature review provides an overview of the various leadership patterns. The third section introduces the research questions and briefly describes the methodology employed.

The findings of the research are presented in section four and are subsequently discussed in section five. The implications and limitations of the study are also presented in this section.

Literature Review

Task and Employee-Centered Leadership

Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1973) produced a graphic presentation of the tradeoff between supervisor's authority and the amount of freedom available to subordinates in reaching decisions, and suggested a continuum of leadership behavior, whose extremes represent boss-centered and subordinate-centered leadership. Similarly, Likert, with the aim of capturing the various aspects of leader-follower relation, proposed four systems of relationships in organizations (Burns & Shuman, 1988) each of which reflects leader position in the democratic versus autocratic dimension. The most recent classification approach is the consulting firm Hay and MacBer's leadership style typology, which points out six distinct leadership styles (Goleman, 2000).

Three of the leadership models suggested by Hay and MacBer, coercive, pacesetter, and authoritative, could be characterized as task-centered or job-centered, to adopt the term proposed by the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan (Callahan, Fleener & Knudson,

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1986). Job-centered types of leadership are linked with close and strict supervision, emphasis on schedules and deadlines, and strict critical evaluation of work performance. Sims and Manz (1996) describe these leadership models as directive, and indicate that their main characteristic is the leader's effort to turn her/his subordinates into compliant followers by adopting command and direction behavior, assigning tasks, and giving punishments. Followers have limited discretion over their job and are rarely allowed to be involved in the decision-making process (Liu, Lepak, Takeuchi, & Sims, 2003).

On Tannenbaum and Schmidt's (1973) continuum, the coercive leader occupies the left extreme where the totally boss-centered pattern is located; the leader identifies eventual problems, considers alternative solutions, selects one of them, and announces this decision to subordinates. Goleman's coercive approach could be identified with Likert's aspect of exploitive-authoritative leadership. Following the coercive pattern, the exploitive-authoritative leader has the propensity to motivate employees not by stressing their essential contribution to the achievement of the shared goals but by making use of threats and punitive methods of strict discipline (Burns & Shuman, 1988). S/he undervalues the significance of the interpersonal relationship factor in getting results and selects fear as a tool for tightly controlling followers (Maccoby, Gittel, & Ledeen, 2004).

Like the coercive style, the second leadership pattern indicated by Goleman (2000)—the pacesetter model, appears highly task focused and deprived of flexibility. The pacesetter leader sets extremely elevated performance standards, and expects excellence from subordinates independently of their potential. However, s/he tends to provide limited guidance and not clearly articulated instructions. Reluctant to devote time to employee professional enhancement, s/he wishes to collaborate only with highly competent and self-directed individuals (Giritli & Topcu Oraz, 2004).

The authoritative leader (Goleman, 2000) gains commitment to the organization's objectives with the aid of her/his vibrant enthusiasm and challenging vision. Likert defines this type of leader as benevolent-authoritative and underlines her/his tendency to use reward as a motivational force and means of control (Fincham & Rhodes, 1999). Having condescending confidence and trust in followers, s/he often offers them the opportunity of commenting on the goal-setting process and partially participating in decision-making within a prescribed framework (Burns & Shuman, 1988). Hence, on Tannenbaum and Schmidt's (1973) continuum, benevolent-authoritative model could be located in the place of the leader who "sells" decisions; after indicating a problem and arriving at a solution rather than simply announcing a de facto

decision, s/he recognizes the possibility of some resistance among subordinates and opts to operate by persuasion. Although s/he reverts to her/his autocratic authority when necessary, s/he allows followers to argue their side of the issue (Owens, 1973).

The main critique for these three styles is that they are monolithic and hardly flexible. According to Goleman (2000), the leaders lack of full confidence and trust in subordinates and disable them from expressing openly their views.

The Managerial Grid from Blake and Mouton supports that concern for the production and concern for employees are two different dimensions for leadership orientation and in a sense introduces the opposite perception in Tannenbaum and Schmidt's continuum (van Weezel, 2006).

These leadership models are described as employee-centered and emphasize delegation of responsibilities and high concern for individual welfare and professional advancement. The leader prioritizes employee satisfaction and establishment of interpersonal relationships over tasks and work performance. These types of leadership, described as empowering, involve followers who participate in making decisions and supervisors who foster "constructive thinking patterns" and "enjoyment and motivation at work" (Liu et al., 2003, p. 133).

Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee (2004) describe the employee-centered leadership as affiliative. Its main feature is the creation of emotional bonds and harmony within organization. The affiliative leader's primary objective consists of building up trust and high-quality working relationships not only among employees but also between her/him and subordinates. Willing to empathize with followers, s/he strives to satisfy their needs, offers ample positive feedback, and recognizes their skills independently of their performance. In addition, employees enjoy the freedom of taking initiative and accomplishing their duties in a way considered as most effective (Goleman, 2000). At the same time, defending the view that "when everyone agrees someone is not thinking" (Kets de Vries, 1996, p. 491), the affiliative leader encourages subordinates to express their opinions and welcomes legitimate complaints, critical comments, and suggestions.

While the affiliative model prioritizes employee emotions over tasks and goals, Goleman's coaching leadership approach focuses primarily on their personal development. Through constant dialog, the leader assists subordinates in identifying their strengths and weaknesses (Giritli & Topcu Oraz, 2004). A coaching leader provides generously plentiful guidance and extensive feedback and as s/he is eager to promote employee professional growth even at the risk of a task being accomplished with delay, s/he delegates chal-

lenging assignments contributing to long-term learning (Goleman, 2000).

Considerable importance to subordinates as individuals and their contribution to the organization's proper functioning is attached by the democratic leader, who seeks their maximum participation by devolving responsibility (Gastil, 1997). Employees have the opportunity of being actively involved in the decision-making process (Gırtlı & Topcu Oraz, 2004). Followers are allowed to decide not only how their tasks will be tackled but also who will perform which task. Adopting Vroom and Yetton's (1973) collective- or group-decision style, the democratic leader shares organizational objectives and problems with subordinates with the aim of reaching consensus, while s/he appears willing to implement a view supported by the majority.

In terms of subordinate participation in the making of decisions, all employee-centered styles could be characterized as participative, since employees are invited to take part in "decisions, policy-making and operation methods" (Owens, 1973, p. 56).

Transactional and Transformational Leadership Styles

The significant quantity of academic output devoted to categorizing organizational leadership has led to numerous different classifications of leadership styles. The most popular classification concerns the type of leader-follower exchange contrasts the transactional model (Wang, Chou, & Jiang, 2005) and the transformational model that Burns (1978) and De Hoogh et al. (2005) identify with charismatic leadership.

The transactional style focuses on the contractual leader-follower relationship restricted to the simple exchange of a certain quality of work for an adequate price (Howell & Avolio, 2001; Wang et al., 2005). The transactional leader clarifies to her/his subordinates' the responsibilities and the tasks to be accomplished, stresses the link between performance and rewards, and specifies the outcomes that individuals can expect in exchange for reaching agreed-upon objectives (Bass, 1985). Based on a mutual material and economic exchange process, the transactional model therefore relies on contingent reward and includes a positive reinforcing interaction between followers and their supervisor (Bass & Avolio, 1993).

In order to secure fertile cooperation within the infrastructure of the company, the leader is mainly concerned with the fairness of outcomes, the preservation of "distributive justice" that is "the typical metric for judging the fairness of transactional contracts and economic exchanges" (Konovsky & Pugh, 1994, p. 658). Finally, the transactional leader is indifferent to employee professional advancement; s/he does not

neglect to strengthen their instrumentality beliefs by confirming that they have well-defined perception of the rewards that may reap for their performance (Pillai, Schriesheim, & Williams, 1999).

Many academics in the field support that a successful career in organizational leadership is tightly connected with charisma (Fincham & Rhodes, 1999). In favor of this view, researchers stressed the significant role of personal characteristics in the emergence of charismatic leadership (Bryman, 1992; Den Hartog & Koopman, 2001; Jacobsen & House, 2001; Judge & Bono, 2000). According to House and Howell (1992) the distinguishing traits of charismatic leaders are cognitive achievement orientation and need for social influence, self-confidence, energy, and enthusiasm, while other researchers add extroversion, agreeableness, and proactivity (Crant & Bateman, 2000; Howell & Avolio, 1993; Judge & Bono, 2002).

Burns (1978) brought the romantic notion of the charismatic great men down to earth by arguing that charismatic leadership simply constitutes a component of broader-based transformational leadership. Charismatic leadership traits are considered as characteristics of the transformational leader.

The transformational type of leadership is based on transforming the organization with the aim of empowering staff members to work for the realization of institutional goals, urged not by financial expediency but by their will to contribute to the realization of the leader's vision (Luthans, 1995). Dissatisfied with the existing status quo, the transformational leader forms a vision of how the future state ought to be and prepares the ground for a series of necessary changes (Bass, 1985, 1997; Dess, Picken, & Lyon, 1998). Alexander the Great is one of the most reputable charismatic leaders (Kets de Vries, 2003) whose behavior confirms the crucial importance for a leader of developing a compelling vision combined with the ability to convey with clarity what he aspires to achieve and where he wishes his followers to be headed (Berson & Avolio, 2004; Den Hartog & Verbarg, 1997).

With a clear and challenging vision of plans and aims, the transformational leader disseminates minutely his strategic objectives so that followers exhibit higher level of commitment to the organizational mission and greater levels of cohesion (Avolio, 1999). Aspirations are translated into more specific goals tied to respective organizational units, in order to foster independent action and stimulate an open learning environment with the aim of facilitating the completion of these goals (Gillen, 2000). The transformational leader renders her/his messages recalled and embraced by subordinates to excite them and intensify their efforts to pursue the institutional objectives (Conger & Kanungo, 1998).

Realizing that the materialization of her/his vision directly depends on the degree to which subordinates agree with the organization's goals. The transformational leader seeks to align her/his followers with the strategic objectives as it is considered that achievement of goals highly depends upon subordinates' agreement with these goals (Pawar & Eastman, 1997; Robbins & Duncan, 1988). By allowing them voice in the goal-setting process, s/he allows them to influence the outcome of the organization's strategic action (Pillai et al., 1999). This makes followers perceive that they are participants in an equitable relationship with their supervisor, who treats them as unique individuals (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996). Thus, the transformational leader manages to build trust among followers (Bennis & Nanus, 1985) and to strengthen both the appeal of his vision and employees' willingness to exert extra effort for the benefit of the organization (Morrow, 1983). However, apart from instilling her/his vision, their own conduct sets the example of excellence and reinforces the values inherent in that vision (De Hoogh et al., 2005; Rasmussen, 1995) in order to render followers highly committed to the shared goal (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978; House, 1977) and motivate them to transcend the self-interest for the sake of the collective good.

Leadership styles described above may not be employed exactly in media companies; there are similarities but even more differences. Media companies have many peculiarities and most of researches have done show that there is not one characteristic leadership style employed in media organizations.

One of the classical studies is that of Küng (2000) which deals with the management style of two leading media companies, the BBC (UK) and CNN (US). The author found that the leadership style was characterized by a mix of measurable incentives such as financial rewards in the case of CNN and nonmeasurable motives such as the ethos, national identity, public service mission for professionals, and other subjective criteria in the case of BBC.

This mixed style was clearer in the case of a communist country such as China. According to the research of Lan and Xu (2006) as there was control from the government, there were two parallel leadership styles: a classical administrative and bureaucratic leadership style more political-oriented based on government party intervention and a western leadership style more economic-oriented.

Prior studies in media management in Greece in 2004 were related to the motives of journalists within local newspapers. The results revealed that journalists were motivated from explicit criteria such as economic bonus and promotion and intrinsic criteria such as the peaceful internal newspaper environment, good personal relations and freedom on journalistic work (Tsourvakas, Veglis, & Zotos, 2004).

Research Methodology

Research Questions

The aim of this study is to investigate the leadership style adopted by the top Greek media companies. The previous analyses about leadership styles added with research that has been done in media companies and their empirical results were the base for the following two research questions:

- RQ1: Is the leadership style of the top Greek media companies more transactional-oriented, that is based only on goals and a strategy with rewards and economic incentives?
- RQ2: Is the leadership style of the top Greek media companies more transformational-oriented, that is based only on communication and personal conviction of the leader for archiving targets?

Research Method

The qualitative method to gather data provides rich insights into and detailed knowledge of the way Greek media leaders exert authority. Semi-structured personal interviews were used in order to allow managers to elaborate on their views.

Seven media companies formed the research sample. Two companies each were drawn from newspapers, magazines, and radio and one from television. Media companies were chosen on the basis of their popularity and brand name in Greek media market as evidenced by sales and figures (EIHEA, 2006; Focus, 2005; Media Service, 2004). As a result, the research sample was restricted to private enterprises.

The interviews took place in the offices of the CEO. The leaders were Aspa Pasiou, CEO of the leading magazine in north Greece "*Close up*" on July 10, 2005; George Psarras, chairman of the first TV station according to advertising revenues "*ALPHA*," on July 19, 2005; Babis Papadimitriou, CEO of the first radio according to the ratings, "*SKY 100.3FM*," on July 20, 2005; George Antoniou, CEO of the second radio according to the ratings, "*ANT 1 Radio*"; Traianos Chatzidimitriou, editor of the newspaper with the highest circulation in north Greece title, "*Aggelioforos*," on July 26, 2005; Gina Spartakou, editor of the first magazine in Greece according to the circulation title "*Marie-Claire*" on July 26, 2005; Serafim Fintanidis, editor of the first national Greek newspaper according to the circulation title "*Eleftherotipia*" on July 28, 2005.

Findings

Media Leadership and Transactional Style

As underlined by Traianos Chatzidimitriou, editor of the newspaper *“Agelioforos,”* “vision cannot play its pivotal role unless it is shared by all staff members;” “if journalists are unaware of institutional purposes they may not be able to contribute decisively to the attainment of organizational goals.” Therefore, he stresses his principle to clearly communicate his vision and strategic objectives, both general and specific, to his journalists aiming to motivate them to highly commit themselves to the newspaper’s aims. As George Psarras, chairman of the TV station *“ALPHA,”* points out, “even when journalists do not know the full extent of the firm’s specific aims, they are deeply cognizant of the goals pursued by the organizational unit for which they work.”

In addition, Psarras highlighted the need for a clear, comprehensible, and compelling vision, which can gain journalist acceptance, excite staff members, and encourage them to “align their future with this vision and its enactment.” For this purpose, the majority of interviewees claim to seek subordinate agreement and consultation concerning institutional goals and policies. Media firms where the company’s goals and priorities are defined and imposed by the businessman/owner and announced to the personnel by the top management were also identified. In such firms, as Aspa Passiou, editor of the magazine title *“Close-up,”* admits, “both leader and journalist duty is restricted to implementing organizational vision and objectives with no freedom of expression and judgments.” However, George Antoniou, general director of the radio station *“ANT 1 Radio,”* stresses that “the media leader’s vision and enthusiasm to work in a medium direct staff working attitude and quite often succeeds in motivating radio people to transcend their self-interest in the name of the collective.” Furthermore, some interviewees mention incidents of journalists who in periods of financial difficulties in the company opted to work overtime for less money to ensure the organization’s survival.

Nonetheless, individuals who head Greek media companies are aware that regardless of their dedication to their job, journalists require financial reward in exchange for their effort. The Greek media leaders are conscious of the fact that a regular reward system coupled with the preservation of this system’s fairness, assures media people of their individual progress and stimulates them to greater effort and higher performance rates. Thus, as confirmed by all research sample members, defending this “distributive justice” becomes one of their main concerns, because it is a major determinant of trust in the company, which in turn affects staff motivation for working.

However, it should be mentioned that interviewees’ attitude concerning the reward system varies. The point of similarity lies in their willingness to recognize staff member’s potential effort and reward high performance of readership or viewership. But the point of disagreement lies in the choice of reward. The editor of the newspaper *“Aggelioforos”* highlights that “it is crucial importance of provide both financial and moral reward in order to ensure journalist’s self-confidence, self-respect and performance.” By consistently praising journalist effort and contribution to the organization’s economic and social success, the media leader fosters a sense of ownership in them and achieves a higher level of journalistic identification with newspaper’s economical and ideological goals.

Serafim Fintanidis, editor of the newspaper *“Eleftherotipia,”* argues that “such a reward system could bring about smoldering rivalries and internal tensions, putting collaboration and working relationships in jeopardy.” Therefore, in this group of media firms, journalist excellence is praised on transactional reward style.

Media Leadership and Transformational Style

While seeking to reinforce journalists’ trust in the media company’s top management through a regular reward system, as mentioned above, media leaders interviewed are developing a growing confidence for their journalists. They state that decision-making processes in today’s Greek media industry are rather democratic, encouraging active journalists’ participation. Most decisions about the themes, coverage issues, and resources are the product of dialog and exchange of views between the top management and journalists.

Praising the significance of group work for the effective operation of a media firm, the majority of the media leaders interviewed revealed their insistence on seeking journalist involvement in the process of planning corporate strategy for the content. On the principle that “an individual might generate a bright idea that has not crossed the mind of her/his colleague,” Babis Papadimitriou, general director of the radio station *“SKAI 100.3FM,”* underlines the necessity for regular meetings for brainstorming, exchange of arguments, and evaluation of suggestions made. From another point of view, the chairman of *“ALPHA”* television channel explains that “journalists’ involvement in developing the company’s news strategy increases their contribution to its implementation. Participation not only offers staff a greater understanding of organizational policies and objectives, but also gives them a stake in attaining these objectives since they perceive they can influence the outcomes and more specific the content of the station.”

It should be mentioned that in spite of the democratic processes and tactics claimed as the modus operandi of an important number of Greek media firms, some aspects of these companies' operations demand autocratic decision-making. First, the nature of the media business itself, especially broadcast media, very often demands what the chairman of "ALPHA" television channel names "management of the moment." The live flow of television and radio program as well as breaking news sometimes creates the need for immediate decisions, making it necessary for top management to ignore the formal decision-making process. In addition, decisions that are related with the company's political affiliation and ideology, or with financial issues linked to the owner's individual or the organization's collective interest, are often made by the media owner without giving staff members the opportunity to express their opinion.

However, media leaders state that such seeds of authoritarianism tend to meet with tolerance from their subordinates, as on the one hand journalists are conscious of the nature of the media firms, and the consequent need for "decisions of the moment," while on the other hand they know that media companies are not purely sources of information but they are also interested in making profits and safeguarding their proprietor's economic interests.

To preserve a favorable atmosphere, Greek media leaders composing the research sample claim to use open dialog and delegation of interesting tasks instead of fear and threat as their regular tools for directing journalists. The general director of "SKAI 100.3 FM" said, "he tends to delegate tasks by supplying staff members only with basic instructions about what should be done and what he expects from them, without indicating the way in which these tasks should be carried out." Interviewees heading Greek media organizations describe themselves as being capable of appreciating their associates' competences and willing to offer them numerous opportunities for self-expression, constructive thinking, and independent action, by prodding them into taking initiative and challenging them to question methods and discover their own ways of accomplishing their duties.

The general director of "ANT 1 Radio" states that "on condition that guidance does not restrict music producer freedom of creative self-expression, it can prove extremely beneficial since it constitutes the fruit of the distillation of multi-year experience and professional wisdom acquired." Particularly in case of media people with limited work experience, guidance represents a "safety valve" for the proper completion of tasks and the prevention of possible errors with negative impact on the company's operation.

Any change initiated by management may meet with personnel's resistance. Persuading media people to accept and implement new ways of doing things is not

an easy task. In order to build a receptive context for a forthcoming change and to counter personnel mistrust, Greek media leaders interviewed claim to act with proactivity by allowing those journalists who are to carry out and adopt an alteration to be involved in the decision and the planning of the implementation policy. In this way, these staff members can understand the necessity of the particular change and its benefits for both the company and its personnel.

Gina Spartakou, editor of the magazine title "Marie-Claire" in Greece, avers that "each mistake provides a useful learning opportunity which could contribute to the development of successful professional action in the future." However, in case of crucial errors which may harm the organization's interests or reputation, the leader's behavior in media firms varies in the following two ways.

Some leaders express their preference for making use of rebuke and threat as means of disapproval, and abstain from using dismissal as a punitive method. The general director of "ANT 1 Radio" points up his intolerance of two types of errors: First, "those causing irreparable damage on the company's interest, fame and reputation;" and second, "mistakes that are constantly repeated out of ignorance or indifference, notwithstanding previous warnings."

Apart from the protection of the company's profitability and reputation, another main priority set by individuals interviewed is the development and maintenance of good working relationships both among staff members and between the leader and her/his associates. The editor of "Marie-Claire" in Greece stresses that "it is imperative to foster harmonious and fertile cooperation among employees within the magazine, since good or bad internal collaboration will be reflected in the quality of the content." Hence, in case of friction among personnel, media leaders are always ready for exercising diplomacy and constructive peaceful dialog in order to defuse the tension. They try to defend the individual who is right without insulting the person who is wrong. But when friendly discussion proves unable to terminate an argument menacing organizational cohesion, leaders end up using threat to force an agreement.

The general director of "ANT 1 Radio" points out that "it is preferable to prevent internal conflicts than to have to cope with them." Leaders of the Greek top media companies state that they strive to build up trust and promote harmony and safety within the organization. The establishment of democratic decision-making processes, the maintenance of a fair and objective reward system, and the preservation of journalist independence in their professional action—within a prescribed framework—contribute to creating an agreeable media environment where media people do not worry that their work or personality may be undermined.

Discussion and Conclusions

The findings of this study confirm that media leaders do not restrict themselves to only one leadership style. With the aim of creating the best possible climate and achieving the highest possible performance rates on the part of journalists, Greek media leaders employ a style formed by the combination of separate attributes characterizing different leadership models.

The particular nature of media firms demands both journalists-centered and task-oriented leadership. As the lack of a vigorous collaborative spirit would be reflected in the quality of media output, a journalist-oriented leadership is required for the promotion of media firm and fruitful cooperation within the company's internal infrastructure. On the other hand, the private media organization's duty to safeguard shareholder interests and company viability makes it imperative to focus on task and goal accomplishment, and therefore requires a job-centered leadership style, aiming at securing high-profit generation. Thus, attributes characterizing the affiliative, the democratic, and the coaching approaches coexist with few autocratic model features and compose the particular leadership style exhibited by media leaders in Greece.

It can be deduced that the mixed leadership style followed by the leaders of Greek top media companies is combining both transformational and transactional model. They recognize the right of journalists to participate in goal setting to some extent. They provide fair contingent rewards in return for reaching performance rates. In addition to salary some leaders reward staff by combining oral compliments with economic bonuses. In terms of decision-making, introducing changes, and problem-solving, Greek media leaders describe themselves as being decentralized and supporters of journalists' participation. Although they take journalists view seriously, they reserve the last word to themselves especially in case of an urgent decision. The democratic character of Greek media leadership is also reflected in media content creation, delegation, team work, and supervision. Without being given restrictive instructions, journalists and creative staff are free to find out their own way of carrying out tasks. However, in spite of the democratic style, the Greek media leaders in the case of serious mistakes include occasional authoritarian intervention in media output.

This study is added to many other cases in the international media management research. There were similar results with the case of Spain media presented by Sanchez-Taberner (2006) where leaders of media companies try to satisfy all stakeholders. Their leadership style is based on economic incentives and achievements based on performance influenced by the market and commercialization and a leadership of democratic with participation of subordinates with target as the achievement of necessary quality.

Moreover, leaders of Greek media demonstrate authoritative decision-making behavior first, in the case of an urgent decision that needs to be made immediately and second, in case of decisions linked with the company's or the proprietor's economic and business interests. This result was similar with the result of Bakker and Wadbring (2006) who found that media leaders in order to anticipate a high, dynamic media environment with many external crises are using a Machiavellian unique management style.

The results from the Greek case, with print journalists to be free to take their own way of managing out content on condition that their supervisor is cognizant of their intentions before any action is taken, were relevant with the results of Powers (2006). The author found that newspaper leaders were more relationship-oriented and television leaders more task-oriented. Wilkins (2006) researches a similar subject but focuses on the correlation between different managerial targets. Media leaders must integrate a leadership style that will take into consideration economic health and profits on the one side and reputation, trust, quality, social responsibility, and ethos on the other. Similar results were found by van Weezel (2006). Media leaders must integrate a mixed leadership style with a balance between concern for people and production.

The research demonstrates that it is difficult to transfer leadership theories in media context and assume that these theories will work in the same way in the media organizations like in other economic sectors. One explanation for this is the peculiarities both in their external and internal environment of media companies all over the world. Media companies have to anticipate fierce competition from many substitute services. (van der Wurff & van Guilenburg, 2001); they face very sophisticated and powerful niche audiences with million of tastes and preferences (Dimmick, 1997). Media companies face a continuing change of technology and distribution methods (Albarran, 1997); hence media companies face difficulties to balance the political issues concerning the public intangible nature of their services with the economic goals (Picard, 2005). Finally, media leaders have to manage many ethical issues concerning the journalists and creative staff practices. Leading media people differs from leading people in other business (Killebrew, 2002).

Implication for Media Practitioners

As leading journalists and creativity are an important part of media companies in order to succeed, there is need for better understanding the characteristics of leadership style. The results of the Greek case could help media leaders to find a better balance between economic and political goals. The research suggests that media management could use both transactional style to put

down goals and give rewards and transformational style with exemptions for solving conflicts and anticipating emergence situations. Media leaders could be more task-oriented for economic issues and immediately more employee-oriented for content issues.

Limitations

The paper offers a valuable framework to analyze media leadership styles but has some limitations. First of all, the research sample was composed of busy top managers which brought about difficulties for the authors in arranging appointments for the carrying out of interviews which, in turn, delayed the qualitative inquiry and reduced the size of the sample. Although this sample was relevant for Greece as the authors took into consideration all the top media companies, it was representative for the Greek case only. A subsequent inquiry could have a bigger sample of media leaders. Of course with the small sample it is difficult to quantify and generalize the results.

Furthermore, the study could investigate subordinate thoughts and opinions about the supervisor's leadership style in order to explore to what extent Greek media leaders' image of themselves is reflected by the staff. It is not enough to know the opinions of CEO's in Greek media companies. In order to see the leadership style it is required that one understands the subordinates' perceptions because by this way probably significant differences would be clarified between the two parties. The present research is a starting point for this direction.

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Appendix: The Questionnaire

1. How did you manage to reach the helm of a media organization?
2. Which is the process of planning the company strategy and setting the company goals?
3. Is there a particular evaluation and reward system?
4. In your opinion; which is the principal motivation, which could increase employee efficiency?
5. Could you describe me the process of reaching to a decision?
6. How is the company strategy communicated to employees and which is the significance of their opinion about it?
7. In which way could a change be adopted more effectively?
8. In your opinion, which is the most effective way of coping with internal conflicts?
9. Which the significance of teamwork for you?
10. To what extent do you intervene in employee output?
11. To what extent do you express your thoughts and feelings to your subordinates and the opposite?
12. In your opinion, which are the characteristics of a successful leader in media business?