Shaping What Shapes Us

A Qualitative Inquiry on How Leaders Employ Media to foster Positive Impact in Organizations and Society

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Abstract

Mediatization is a well-acknowledged phenomenon by academia that denotes the ways reality is stirred by the implications of digital nevertheless, there is little adaptive knowledge on the impacts of this phenomena in crucial organizational management concepts such as leadership. In response to these scientific uncertainties, the principal aim of the present inquiry was to explore the nuanced manners in which leaders harness digital media to foster positive transformations in their organizational environments and society. Based on this, the central research question reads as follows: ***How is Mediatized Leadership practiced by creative(s) roles to enhance "positive impact" within their organizational structures and in society?***

The general scope of positive impact outcomes demanded a separation into two (2) research focuses based on the nature of the improvement: *1) Positive impacts in organizations*, and *2) Positive impact in society*. Grounded on theory, a thematic analysis surrounding the strategic use of media in leaderships to foster beneficial outcomes in these two settings was studied. This helped to get a first glance on the mode of digital media employments by leaderships across the aisle.

This study employed a qualitative methodology by means of semi-structured interviews conducted to fifteen (15) leaders in creative positions. Thereafter, a thorough transcription of the interviews was performed. A three-level inductive analysis in the form of an analytical code tree followed to identify general (relevant) patterns. Improvements in organizations by means of mediatized leadership practices aimed to reinforce artistic entrepreneurship, leadership practice reflexivity, and organizational synergy. improvements in the social sphere related to the formulation of social capital and social innovation.

The implications of this research evidenced the strategic improvements and ethical considerations of employing digital media in organizational and society. It underscored the need for greater adaptive leadership strategies that enhance digital media's potential while navigating complexities. Future research was encouraged to explore the impacts of mediatized leadership practices on creativity and innovation, improve its methodological weaknesses by expanding the interview sample, and seek greater contextualization across different cultural and technological realities.

In conclusion, this study developed a greater theoretical understanding of mediatized leadership's role in the progress of organizations and society. By involving digital media technologies in leadership strategies, creatives fostered innovation, enhanced communication, and promoted inclusive leadership in the digital era.

KEY WORDS: *1) digital 2) mediatization, 3) impact, 4) leadership, and 5) innovation*

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Background

In recent decades, the ubiquity of technological innovations has fundamentally transformed media. The diffusion of information and the development of communications has turned into actions characterized by immediateness, general accessibility, and significant reach in comparison to previous media channels like the printed press and physical interactions (Couldry & Hepp, 2013; Couldry & van Dijck, 2015; Hjarvard, 2008, 2013; Lindgren, 2017; Meikle, 2016; Raelin, 2019, p. 2). Whether it is through social media, entertainment platforms or corporate communication tools, media has become an omnipresent component of modernity, changing, impacting, maybe even democratizing "agency" of participants in various forms to define, contribute, and discuss the "advent of the present" and shape the making of meaning (in the form of information, knowledge, current affairs, social issues, etc.) within the various globalized digital arenas capable of shaping people' s perceptions on reality (Couldry & Hepp, 2013; Couldry & van Dijck, 2015).

As a result of these transformations, the concept of leadership— a long studied element by social scientists—has entered a new phase that demands greater contextualization to be effectively applied/practiced in today's society (Castels, 2011; Yip & Raelin, 2011, 2012; Raelin, 2019). The term "Mediatized Leadership" is rarely used in research now; however, its terminology serves as a portmanteau that acknowledges the instrumental need of modern media in the consolidation of a leader' s authority and legitimacy enhancement with their present environments (Deuze, 2011; Couldry & Hepp, 2017; Hjavard, 2013). Ultimately, media as a tool of influence and an effective mediatized leadership to enable it.

To keep pace with the evolving nature of information society, understanding "effective" leadership practices in a media-saturated environment demands viewing them from an academic lens ground itself in adaptable, iterative learning, and collectivistic actions (Castells, 2011; Carroll et al., 2008; Collinson, 2017, 2018; Denis et al., 2010; Küpers, 2013; Liu, 2015; Matsuo, 2012; Raelin, 2016, 2017, 2019; Yip & Raelin, 2011, 2012). Leadership-as-practice (LAP) is a scientific approach that matches that criteria, viewing leadership as a process sensitive to its environment, open for change, and highly reflective (Carroll et al., 2008; Yip & Raelin, 2011, 2012; Collinson, 2017; Raelin, 2019). By understanding the modus operandi of mediatized

leadership through LAP, one can appreciate the nuances of how it operates on both an individual and a collective level, and how it is influenced by the surrounding context –the mediatized environment.

1.2 Societal and academic relevance

In recent years, uncertainties surrounding the interaction between media and leadership have significantly impacted society, particularly those resulting from leaders' activities in social media platforms and other mass media channels (e.g. news outlets, online press, streaming services) (Warner & Wager, 2021). The spread of misinformation and hate speech by leaders online has exacerbated political polarization in democracies, increased discrimination against minority groups, and threatened other fields systemically crucial like health care, justice, and safety (George & Labkani, 2019; Leonardi & Vaast, 2022).

The societal relevance of this inquiry relies on the much-needed development of solutions to our greatest contextual concerns. The acknowledgement of reality' s dynamic environment demands the creation of adaptable knowledge keeping pace with our fast-changing globalized context; a context in which for the first time in centuries, information data has replaced oil as its central asset (Fairhurst, 2009; Castels, 2011; Couldry & Hepp, 2019). Better understanding well-intentioned mediatized leadership practices by individuals, businesses and collectives can not only improve social and economic performance indicators, but also recognize how media and leadership work together shaping and adding to the outcomes in this context.

Furthermore, there are multiple reasons why this inquiry is academically relevant. In organizational management sciences, situational leadership is a field relatively new, and significantly underdeveloped when compared to traditional leadership models (Fairhurst, 2009; Warner & Wager, 2021; Castels, 2011; Yip & Raelin, 2011, 2012; Raelin, 2019). Nevertheless, situational leaderships have demonstrated to be greatly efficient in fulfilling strategies, while at the same time reducing burdens to society. In the modernized present, developing knowledge and theories that recognize the consequential role of media in day-to-day functioning is still an academic gap of significant potential (Reckwitz, 2002; Warner & Wager, 2021).

By inquiring mediatized leadership, a window of opportunity emerges to understand and include new styles of leadership like the role of "influencers" in social media and digital activism for altruistic causes (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012; Earl & Kimport 2013; Xia, Munson, & Resnick

2016; Freelon, McIlwain, & Clark, 2022). The development of theories surrounding mediatized leadership can serve as well as a useful practical resource in change management, improving organizational resource allocation with organizational structures (Ensign, 1998; Larsson & Finkelstein, 1999; Fairhurst, 2009; Johansen & Frandsen, 2017; Pfeffer, 2018). Moreover, the "glass cage" effect that mediatized leadership experience in online platforms can help to understand public perception and discourse, crucial aspects for understanding their dynamic interaction with ethical principles, authority, legitimacy of influence roles (Carroll et al., 2008; Collinson, 2017; Reckwitz, 2002).

1.3 Aims of study

Responding to the societal relevance and academic potentials, this paper focused on qualitatively exploring the ways in which digital media and leadership practices are employed to enhance Positive Impact for organizational structures and society. The participants in this study were or currently are in creative positions within an organizational environment. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews with all fifteen (15) participants. The next five (5) objectives offered directionality to the research in order to provide answers:

1. **Evaluation of Societal Relevance and Academic Potential:** Dwelling on how digital media and leadership practices can be leveraged in order to foster positive impact on organizational structures and society. This through the use of contemporary literature.

2. **Qualitative Exploration of Media and Leadership Practices:** Conduct a qualitative analysis based on the experiences on how digital media and leadership practices were employed by creative positions in professional environments.

3. **Assessment of Creative Roles Impact:** Making an evaluation on the manners in which individuals within creative roles make use of digital media and leadership practices to foster organizational and societal improvements.

4. **Development of Semi-structured Qualitative Interviews:** Collect data on the insights and experiences from fifteen (15) participants in the form of semi-structured interviews, emphasizing their experiences in employing digital media and leadership practices throughout their professional work.

5. **Research Reflexivity and Open-Mindedness:** Identifying beneficial prospects and potential challenges related to the employment of digital media and leadership practices. Taking into account their implications in organizational effectiveness and society.

1.4 Research question

Consequently and in accordance with the aforementioned objectives, the following (main) research question reads as follows:

How is Mediatized Leadership practiced by creative(s) roles to enhance "positive impact" within their organizational structures and in society?

For this, the following two scopes in form of sub-questions will be inquired:

1. ***How is Mediatized Leadership practiced by creative roles to enhance "positive organizational impact"?***
2. ***How is Mediatized Leadership practiced by creative roles to enhance "positive societal impact"?***

These sub-questions serve the existent literature frameworks assessing leadership and its positive impact; these offer two (2) main types of beneficial implications as a result of the proper a employment of mediatized leadership competencies: (1) Positive impact in organizations understood as the leader' s ability to create a trusting, productive, and good working relationship with his/her/their team, as well as tangible improvements in the productive performance (2) Positive impact in society explained as a beneficial change on a pressing societal issue(s), and the creation of value through his/her/their work.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

2.1 Mediatized Leadership

"Mediatized leadership" is a portmanteau terminology central to this inquiry which roots from the transformation of human processes and structures in response to mediatization. Couldry & Hepp (2013) conceptualize mediatization as the resulting phenomenon of the growing interdependence of society to media, which has triggered a change in society and culture, and the consolidation of media logics within institutional practice, formats and discourse. Likewise, Hjarvard (2009) argues that media technology "reaches" and has integrated media in the fabrics of everyday life.

Thus, the term "mediatized leadership" denotes the integration of a media logic in leadership practices. It acknowledges a context where social, cultural, and economic interactions among actors strongly depend on media as the main pillar to modern-day communication (Couldry & Hepp, 2013; Couldry & van Dijck, 2015). A cross-sectional phenomenon characterized by the immediate diffusion of information, greater democratic participation in meaning-building, and fast-changing technology advancements (Hjarvard, 2009; Couldry & Hepp, 2013; Couldry & van Dijck, 2015).

Besides acknowledging the influence of media in redefining embedded institutional aspects, making use of existent academic frameworks that conceptualize the dynamics of leadership, associated behaviors and traits was necessary to objectively study its contextual roll-out (Castells, 2011; Carroll et al., 2008; Collinson, 2017, 2018; Denis et al., 2010; Küpers, 2013; Liu, 2015; Matsuo, 2012; Raelin, 2016, 2017, 2019; Yip & Raelin, 2011, 2012). For this, Leadership-As-Practice (LAP) is a scientific approach that not only offers an understanding of leadership, but that matches the main characteristics of the mediatized environment. Just as Couldry & Hepp (2013) described the implementation of media logics in institutional practice, LAP scholars highlight the importance of situationality, iterative learning, and collective involvement.

In keeping up with this topic, LAP is an academic lens that emphasizes the dynamic nature of leadership in the modern context. This implies that leadership should be viewed as an emergent process rather than a set of unique personality traits or strategic behavioral patterns to achieve specific objectives (Yip & Raelin, 2011, 2012; Raelin, 2019) . The main five

characteristics of leadership-as -practice are: *1) Emphasizing the process over outcomes, 2) Understanding the contextual factors, 3) Reinforcing members' interactions , 4) Iterative learning, and 5) Openness for reflection.* (Raelin, 2016, 2017, 2019; Yip & Raelin, 2011, 2012). How these main characteristics influence our understanding of the phenomenon, will be shown subsequently.

2.2 Positive Impact

The term "positive impact" denotes a beneficial effect and/or constructive impact on individuals, organizations, and communities resulting from the development of well-intentioned leadership practices. In the context of this research, this terminology will be associated with the outcomes of strategies powered by or centrally based through the employment of digital media technologies aimed to resolve challenges by members in creative leadership roles and their practices (Schrerer & Palazzo, 1997; Ensign, 1998; Kanter, 1999, Larsson & Finkelstein, 1999; Fairhurst, 2009; Couldry & Van Dijk, 2015; Johansen & Frandsen, 2017; Pfeffer, 2018). Is worth to note that these strategies involve well-intentioned and motivated practices by these leaders to push forward ideas aligned to ethical/moral principles, in favor of improvements within their organizational structure, and societal wellbeing. (Kanter, 1999, Schrerer & Palazzo, 2007;. Bennett & Stegberg, 2012; Earl & Kimpor, 2013; Xia, Munson, & Resnick 2016)

This research will offer two academic scopes aiming to study the manners in which mediated leadership is employed to achieve positive impact in two (2) related but different contexts: *organizational structures* and *society*. The argument separating the inquiry scope of positive societal impact from positive organizational impact does not stem from the belief that improvements for organizations cannot be viewed as improvements for society, but rather from acknowledging the generality of positive impact as a topic of inquiry, and the significant cross-sectional influence of media in our context (Bolden et al., 2005; Maak & Pless, 2006; Hjarvard, 2009; Couldry & Hepp, 2013; Couldry & van Dijck, 2015). The model graph below narrows down the aforementioned claim *(See graph 1.1).*
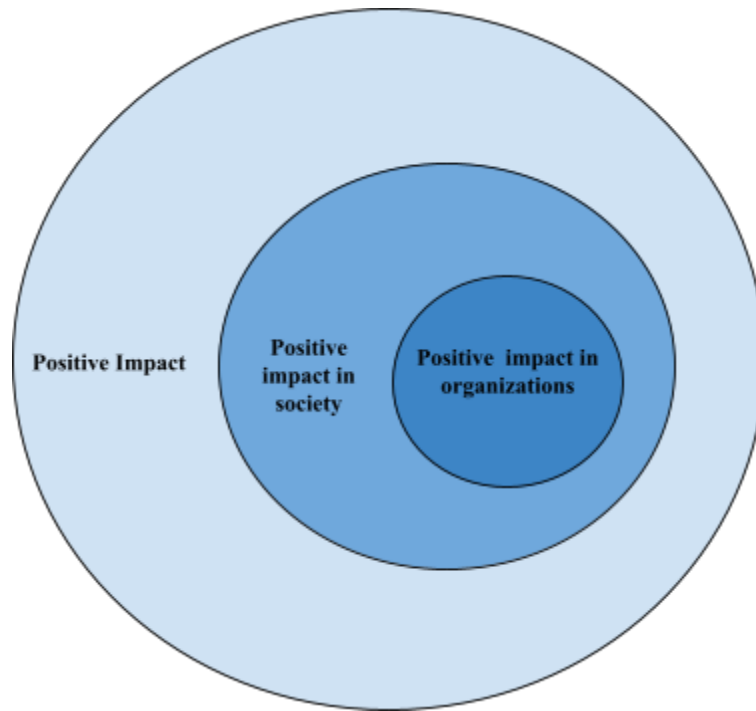
1.1 Positive Impact Level Model (Own creation)

2.2.1 Positive impact in organizations

Considering the aforementioned, positive impacts in organizations refers to the group of beneficial effects experienced by the organization due to an improvement in its operational functioning resulting from the implementation of well-intentioned and efficient practices (Avolio et al., 2007; Cameron, 2008). In return, these positive outcomes equally benefit units within the organization, ranging from members, components, stakeholders, any other group of relevant actors involved in the structure (Cameron, 2008). Additionally, it encompasses various domains of the organization ranging from its culture, productive processes, operations, and relationships . Although it could be considered as part of a broader societal gain since it contributes to the overall construction of social value, its primary focus pertains to its immediate organizational environment (Cameron, 2008, Hjarvard, 2009; Couldry & Hepp, 2013; Couldry & van Dijck, 2015).

In the context of Information Society, media has presented itself as an indispensable tool for the productive sector to fulfill a great number of strategic objectives, ranging from financial desires to managing change among others (Harrison et al., 1991; Larsson & Finkelstein, 1999;

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Tanriverdi & Venkatraman, 2005; Fairhurst, 2009; Castells, 2011; Bennett & Segerberg, 2013, Chadwick, 2013; Westerman, Bonnet & McAfee, 2014). Furthermore, the constant exposure of a collective' s image and reputation in social media platforms has significantly reinforced the need for homogeneous transparency and reflexivity across the organization, particularly at the managerial level (Reckwitz, 2002; Carroll et al., 2008; Castells, 2011; Collinson, 2017). As advocated by leadership-as-practice (LAP), modern collectives need a mediatized leadership that ignites an iterative learning process, by encouraging members' potential and transforms their voices into a crucial component of constructing adaptable knowledge in favor of the organization' s strategic goals (Hjarvard, 2009; Couldry & Hepp, 2013; Couldry & van Dijck, 2015 Nonaka & Takeuchi, 2017; Avolio & Kahai, 2018; Du Pleiss, 2019; Kagermann & Wahlster, 2021)

In the following paragraphs, four (4) academic themes obtained from an extensive literature analysis will serve as a starting note to theorize how mediatized leadership practices are employed in organizational and freelancing structures to foster the subjects leadership. These themes are: *1) organizational synergy, 2) culture enrichment, 3) network expansion,* and *4) knowledge and innovation.*
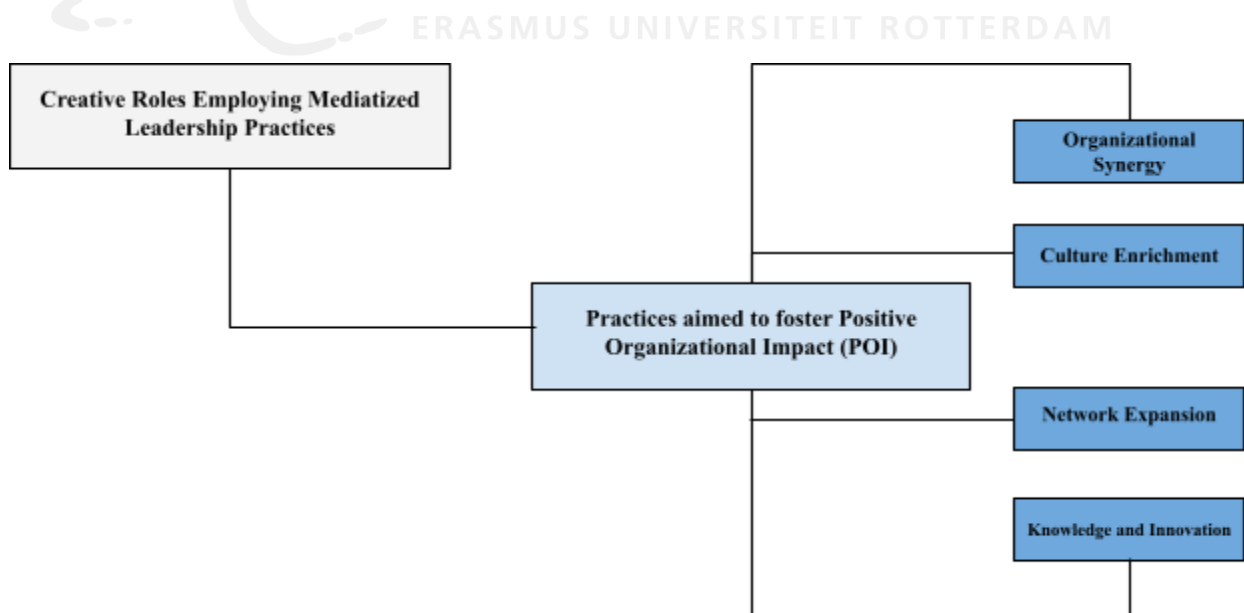

Figure 1.1 Explanatory graphic (Own creation)

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2.2.1.1 Organizational synergism

Fairhurst (2009) mentions that aiming for greater organizational synergy by employing situational leadership has demonstrated consequent improvements in their operational efficiency. In essence, this concept denotes the enhancement of an organization's performance through the combined and collective effort set into place by members of the designated structure (Larsson & Finkelstein, 1999; Fairhurst, 2009). In other words, organizational synergy provides a unitary perspective on modern productive functioning by highlighting the importance of seeing structures, rather than separated components dedicated to specific skill or knowledge areas (Harrison et al., 1991; Larsson & Finkelstein, 1999; Tanriverdi & Venkatraman, 2005).

Moreover, research has inquired on the play-out of organizational synergy in the mediatized productive environment. The reliance on media information technologies to facilitate guidance and increase behavior cohesion among employees has enhanced task completion and reduced the depletion of resources resulting from internal miscommunications (Ensign, 1998; Larsson & Finkelstein, 1999. Johansen & Frandsen, 2017; Pfeffer, 2018). This is particularly visible when conveying the vision, mission, and goals which are crucial parts of a successful unitary strategy (Larsson & Finkelstein, 1999; Pfeffer, 2018).

The employment of digital content, digital supervision, and instant messaging technologies have simplified procedures including training and onboarding of members. In addition to that, greater exposure on social media has brought valuable human talent and ramped up production by eliminating gaps on product/service creation, replication and provision (Tanriverdi & Venkatraman, 2005; Tench & Jones, 2015; Pfeffer, 2018).

However, the media has not only benefited the economic interests of organizations. To visualize this claim, one must look into the redistribution of power within traditional organizational structures brought by the general accessibility of any online user to social media platforms. The agency provided to employees, partners and other relevant stakeholders of voicing their opinions on the organization's practices, and the immense potential for innovation and creation from unlimited social sharing has turned managerial roles no longer fully necessary to achieve leadership within this structure (Fairhurst, 2009). This refreshing opportunity for bottom-up initiative and the "glass cage" effect related to the strong scrutiny of organizations by the public has developed a growing need for holistic decision making, in line with the collectivistic approach to leadership by LAP scholars (Castells, 2011) In other words, in modern

mediatized organizations bosses, partners and employees recognize each other's input, behaviors, and action as essential to create positive influence within the structure.

Overall, the employment of organizational synergism by mediatized leaderships can be observed in the improved visualization of organizational goals and strategy due to the multiple media technologies facilitating learning and communication (Ensign, 1998; Larsson & Finkelstein, 1999. Johansen & Frandsen, 2017; Pfeffer, 2018). Moreover, the open exposure and at-hand media channels like social media have expanded the reach and exposure of organizations bringing in new input and talents useful to fulfill their goals. Also, media channels have redistributed the power dynamics of hierarchical leadership within industries, recognizing bottom-up initiative and the relevance of holistic observances (Tanriverdi & Venkatraman, 2005; Tench & Jones, 2015; Pfeffer, 2018). Resulting from this, mutual accountability and transparency for organizational member's actions has fostered an environment of trust. This has reinforced the relationships between managers, members and other relevant stakeholders finding in synergism a key to greater and more efficient performance.

The acknowledgement of organizational synergy as a strategic opportunity, and its facilitation by the immediateness and dynamism of media technology seems to offer a clear vision on what LAP movement scholars agree about collective leadership in modern operational settings. The enhancement of personal and productive trust relationships within organizations, in combination with the acknowledgement of every unit as crucial building blocks for successful performance go in line with the mediatized context, where leaders and media employ concepts like organizational synergy to foster .

2.2.1.2 Culture Enrichment

Culture within organizations refers to the in-place set of shared behaviors and values, constructed and reproduced by associated members within a given organizational structure. It is essentially the "personality" of an organization since it not only allocates a specific character, but it also encompasses decision-making on productive and proactive functions and institutionalized the management of interactions between relevant stakeholders associated with the firm (Martin, 2002; Schein, 2010; Espedal & Carlsen; 2024), Moreover, organizational culture has consequential implications in the personal and professional life of individuals working for the

structure, as well as the performance of accomplishing a determined strategy, and ultimately, the enhancement of positive organizational impact as mentioned previously (Espedal & Carlsen, 2024).

With this in mind, the fast-paced development of globalization resulting from the numerous innovations in communication technologies started a cultural "revolution". In the organizational context, this implied a significant transformation of profit-maximizing mindsets, practices and procedures now aiming to create balance between organizational strategies, its components and immediate environment (Stiglitz, 2002). To visualize the aforementioned, a good example is the rearrangement of corporate priorities. These are showing greater distance from profit-making tunnel visions, and including further recognition of the relevance of sustainable practices (Martin, 2002; Stiglitz, 2002). In simple terms, the fast-paced globalization brought by ICTs has redefined the mentalities of doing business, bringing forward public value as a key component of modern organizational success.

Nevertheless, a fast-paced globalization powered by ICTs has not been the sole event taking place and shifting organizational culture' s foundations. The conceptualisation surrounding effective leadership has equally adjusted to the changes brought by the onset of public value as a crucial aspect within modern organizational practices and strategies (Hjarvard, 2009; Schein, 2010; Couldry & Hepp, 2013) Is worth noting that leadership as a role of influence is crucial in setting the tone, providing guidance, and formalizing the normative system to which others will adhere and follow. However in a current mediatized reality, the reproduction of these systems by productive components (members, workers, stakeholders, etc…) will highly depend on the alignment of the leadership' a cultural approach to the societal views, particularly in a "glass house" context were media channels facilitate access to criticism and opposition (Castells, 2011).

In line with this, the accessibility and constant supervision by digital audiences to cultural practices, in combination to the increasing importance of public value creation in domains such as inclusion, ecology, and reflexivity has initiated a transformation of cultures within these structures (Schein, 2010). The aforementioned explains why leaders have raised great interest in taking steps through organizational policy to reduce hazards within the structures and in their immediate environments.

For instance, "The Great Resignation" was a labor market phenomenon that took place after the Covid-19 pandemic which unleashed economic fallout in the developed nations. It reflected a growing dissatisfaction for people' s working conditions, monetary remuneration and overall work-life balance (Cook & Grimshaw, 2022; Klotz & Bollino, 2022). In fact, low job satisfaction was the primary causal factor for dissertation, in combination to burn-outs and few professional prospects. Millions of workers resigned to their positions, and companies faced a big human resource gap to accomplish their outputs. This example of bottom-up collective leadership pushed forward by online users who demanded better labor rights and a cultural shift away from profit maximization mindsets had a significant impact on the organizational culture, and reflected a desire for greater involvement of public value in the working environment (Klotz & Bollino, 2022).

These mediatized leadership examples in the form of online collectives emerging after the pandemic are well-related to proposed strategies to counteract existent issues within structures with weakened ethical principles. Espedal & Carlsen (2024) entail that value inquiry as a collective exploration and is part of a transformative process aimed to create positive outcomes in members within and outside organizations. The "inquiry" for situationality and reflexivity within leadership practices originates from the identification of issues, a critical assessment of practices, a redefinition of concepts and a room for situational experimentation. It has been shown that organizations that implement strategies similar to the ones proposed by "value inquiry" not only show improved performance but an enhancement of collective leadership with strong commitment and adaptability (Hjarvard, 2009; Hofstede, 2011; Couldry & Hepp, 2013 Espedal & Carlsen, 2024)

2.2.1.3 Network Expansion

The term "Network Expansion" makes reference to the growth of new networks and the reinforcement of the existing ones by individuals or organizations. Castells (2011) mentions that this concept equally disregards whether the nature of the interaction is motivated by economic, political or socio cultural reasons, and is driven by various factors, particularly *Network Society* enhancers such as globalization, advancements in technology and a cross-traditional boundary collaboration.

Within the mediatized context of society, technology developments in the media such as the massification of information resulting from the internet and the growing reliance of human interactions on social media platforms, the "network expansion" experienced by all levels of society has been consequential (Couldry, 2008; Castells, 2011; Bennett & Segerberg, 2013, Chadwick, 2013). Scholars agree that the mediatized networking strategies pushed forward by leaders online (e.g. influencers, politicians, activists) has been effective in reaching bigger audiences and formalizing their influence at a larger scale (Couldry, 2008; Castells, 2011; Bennett & Segerberg, 2013, Chadwick, 2013; Westerman, Bonnet & McAfee, 2014).

Moreover, leaders employing or constantly present in social media and other entertainment platforms like video streaming services have become daily part of the public discussions around relevant issues. Their participation has not only benefited them by providing a greater exposure and reach, but it has created a "glass house" effect in which their behavior, thinking, and actions are in constant scrutiny by members within and outside their network (Chadwick, 2013; Lischka, 2019). The fallout from criticism on mistakes has driven greater transparency and accountability from leaderships, and in a way, balanced-out the relationships within networks by demands of principle-based behaviors (Lischka, 2019).

An example that may support the employment of mediatized leadership practices directed to expand an organization's network is Satya Nadella's leadership of Microsoft (Westerman, Bonnet & McAfee, 2014; Nadella, 2017). As CEO of this tech-giant he was able to communicate a vision through multiple media channels, fostering a digital culture of greater collaboration between stakeholders (Westerman, Bonnet & McAfee, 2014). The resulting outcome was the creation of strategic partnerships with other companies such as social media platforms (e.g. Linkedin and Github), and a cultural revolution moving away from traditional values to innovation. Lastly, the organization's image significantly improved, attracting a sizable number of investment and sustained capital for future innovations, many calling it a "digital revolution" of the company (Hepp, 2013; Westerman, Bonnet & McAfee, 2014; Nadella, 2017).

In organizational management sciences, studying the effects of the instrumentalization of modern media to consolidate greater and cross-sectional interdependencies in networks by leadership is still in the early stages of development (Hepp, 2013). When it comes to long-term implications of mediatized leaderships and network expansions, multiple uncertainties regarding the consolidation of a leader's authority and its legitimacy remain strong (Couldry, 2008; Hepp,

2013, Bennett & Segerberg, 2013, Lischka, 2019). There seems to be growing erosion of trust among leaders and audiences in social media platforms, since the increased impact of misinformation campaigns and a preference-based algorithm has created online "bubbles" where users of similar political and socio-cultural ideologies distance themselves from objective facts (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013, Lischka, 2019).

Following on the "online bubbles" within platforms such as social media and news outlets, academics are concerned on the uptrending phenomenon similar to a network fragmentation difficult to solve (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013). This fragmentation leads to significant challenges for the combination of media and leadership to enhance effective strategies by organizations since the lack of collaboration in terms of knowledge and skills among relevant stakeholders will ultimately create hardships for the implementation leaders' decisions (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013, Lischka, 2019).

2.2.1.4 Knowledge and innovation

In semantic terms, knowledge refers to a set of information, expertise, and skills that individuals and organizations possess. Regarding innovation, this one denotes the use of knowledge in combination with other input to develop a new product/service, or the improved version of an existing one (Du Pleiss, 2019). In order to understand the relationship between knowledge and innovation, it is important to understand that knowledge by itself only serves as a foundational basis to this process (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 2017; Du Pleiss, 2019). Thus, it is the drive from individuals willing to and practically apply knowledge at the service of improving or creating new output that enhances innovation (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 2017).

After reviewing the definitions and relationship between the aforementioned concepts, mediatized leaderships have employed its combined use in order to formulate improvements in the organizational environment and societal contexts. The promotion of effective communication strategies by leaders through the various media channels at their disposal (e.g. social media platforms, digital omni channels) has widened the reach of bigger and diverse audiences (Avolio & Kahai, 2018). This has generated a stronger culture of knowledge sharing through faster diffusion of information between stakeholders (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 2017).

Triggered by this phenomenon, Avolio & Kahai (2018) state that the formalization of new effective knowledge systems is taking a significant role in modern day organizational

functioning and in overall society. Better knowledge systems mean better outcomes; harmonizing the organization' s productive interests with the demands of the competitive and fast-paced market. It also drives a higher amount of innovation since the immediate nature of modern ICTs provide leaders with improved knowledge and a greater perspective (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 2017; Avolio & Kahai, 2018; Du Pleiss, 2019).

To visualize the formulation of these effective outcomes one can take a look at mediatized leaderships developed by big players in the technology industry; an industry field characterized by its fierce knowledge and innovation competitiveness. The transnational tech-giant Siemens has oftenly received credit for the application of digital transformations across various levels of its operational functioning (Kagermann & Wahlster, 2021). In fact, the company has been able to foster greater productivity and improved sustainable business models through the use of 4.0 Principles (interconnection, technological assistance, decentralization, information transparency), hybrid systems and Internet of Things (IoT) mechanims (Fost & Overhage, 2019; Kagermann & Wahlster, 2021; Warner & Wäger, 2021;). Additionally, its leadership has made use of digital channels to enhance communication and a knowledge sharing culture among stakeholders, driving up innovation in the past years (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 2017; Avolio & Kahai, 2018; Du Pleiss, 2019; Kagermann & Wahlster, 2021).

Furthermore, important players in the healthcare provision industry such as the Mayo Clinic group, have utilized mediatized leadership practices oriented to improve organizational performance through the creation of a knowledge exchange and innovation environment (Fost & Overhage, 2019; Kagermann & Wahlster, 2021). The active involvement of executive roles of the company in digital platforms have improved healthcare solutions to patients while in the meantime enhancing the collaboration of internal and external networks in this knowledge culture has been keen in a successful dynamic business model development (Du Pleiss, 2019; Kagermann & Wahlster, 2021).

In terms of academic uncertainties, the doubts fall mostly on the potential long-term downsides and risks of mediatized leadership practices increasingly relying on the knowledge systems directed to create innovations (George & Lakhani, 2019; Warner & Wäger, 2021). Some scholars mention that the positive side of digital leaderships in knowledge and innovation may be shattered by the overwhelming amount of sources, cybersecurity risks and the stifling of creativity due to excessive digital surveillance (George & Lakhani, 2019; Warner & Wäger,

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2021; Leonardi & Vaddi, 2022). Also, thanks to the recent rise in IoT and Artificial Intelligence (AI) has opened the door for a media technology intervention paradox where tensions of both controlling these tools and fostering an environment of innovation (Warner & Wäger, 2021; Leonardi & Vaddi, 2022).

2.2.2 Positive impacts in Society

This term makes reference to the group of beneficial effects across the immediate societal environment that result from the development of well-intentioned strategies that individuals or groups design and later implement (Kanter, 1999, Schrerer & Palazzo, 1997; Couldry & Van Dijk, 2015). In the context of this research, the definition will make reference to the improvements in various societal realities thanks to the roll-out of mediatized leadership practices by members of social and business organizations (Kanter, 1999, Schrerer & Palazzo, 2007;. Bennett & Stegberg, 2012; Earl & Kimpor, 2013; Xia, Munson, & Resnick 2016) This entails exclusive actions, procedures and initiatives pushed forward with and through the employment of ICTs and other media instruments.

Examples resulting from the implementation of media-centered strategies by organizational leaderships can be the overall increase in sustainability thanks to the multiple awareness campaigns for both producers and consumers on social media and digital platforms (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012; Earl & Kimport 2013; Xia, Munson, & Resnick 2016; Freelon, McIlwain, & Clark, 2022; Lee & Chan, 2023). Moreover, a greater representation of marginalized communities' representation in media by businesses also demonstrates significant societal improvement through mediatized leadership practices (Wang & Chang, 2015; Patel & Nguyen, 2022; Fischer; 2022).

Taking into account the aforementioned and following a deduction of theories from a diverse selection of existent academic papers on the matter, the next three (3) scientific themes seem to synthetize the ways in which mediatized leadership practices are displayed by organizational members roll-out, and consolidate positive outcomes for society: *1) Civic Mobilization,* **and** *2) Diversity Enhancement*
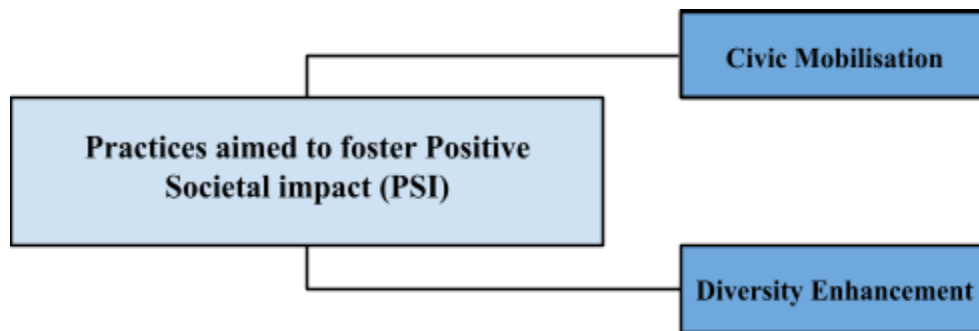
Figure 1.2 Explanatory graphic (Own creation)

2.2.2.1 Civic Mobilization

This term refers to the process in which individuals and other societal actors are empowered to become proactive in public and in the political environment with the objective of changing an evolving situation they view as wrong. The forms in which this activism is rolled-out by these individuals is through direct-action protests, online demonstrations, consumer boycotts, and voting. This type of activism tends to involve the organization of various civil domains through a network that aims to facilitate the expansion of awareness and public support. They often align to causes in favor of greater democratic freedoms, the protection of human rights, and the reduction of social inequality.

In the late decades, digital activism by societal actors has taken significant strength illustrating the impact of the online platforms in presenting users an opportunity to observe, participate and connect with others of similar ideologies (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012; Earl & Kimport) Even if users don't agree or do not prefer a particular content, they are still able to participate in the public discussions by sharing their ideas, and observing limitless audiovisual content (Earl & Kimport, 2013; Xia, Munson, & Resnick 2016). on diverse topics. This is where leadership roles play a significant part in the online general debate around issues, since their authority and legitimacy tends to also translate in the virtual world, increasing the benefits of combining mediatized leadership and achieving positive societal change (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012; Earl & Kimport 2013; Xia, Munson, & Resnick 2016).

The manners in which mediatized leaderships and civic mobilization are intertwined can be categorized in groups. From one hand, it is possible for leaders to amplify their message to bigger and different online audiences, expanding their network of supporters, enhancers, and critics. In social media, this effect is mostly defined by algorithmic software that benefits effective communication strategies rolled-out by leaders online (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012; Earl & Kimport 2013; Xia, Munson, & Resnick 2016; Freelon, McIlwain, & Clark, 2022). Secondly and acknowledging the logistics challenges of coordinating sizable groups of activists, media communication in the form of direct messaging platforms (E. g. WhatsApp, WeChat, Messenger) have simplified the streamline efforts of aligning collaborators and influencing participants (Lee & Chan, 2023)

Lastly, although the media is a huge opportunity for modern leadership, it could be viewed as a "double-end sword" (Castells & Shirky, 2020). One side is quite efficient in delivering the necessary transparency on leadership' s modus operandi to the audience, demanding best-effort and coherent behavior (McIlwain, & Clark, 2022; Lee & Chan, 2023). If not, accountability comes usually in the form of negative perceptions from the online audiences, counter-movements and in extreme cases, being "canceled" by society according to cultural judgements. The economic implications of reputational damage for online leaders and organizations can be irreparable.

After reviewing the close relationship between mediatized leadership aimed to mobilize civil society in favor of a positive societal cause, there are still significant uncertainties in the implications of employing these strategies. Although positive impact could be empirically demonstrated through improving economic and social indicators resulting from well-intentioned leaderships in media, the generalized and perpetual debate around the meaning of beneficial outcomes are subject to individual perceptions and realities embodied by online users, and online ideology groups (Castells & Shirky, 2020; Van Dijk & Hacker, 2021). In other words, what is positive for person X is not necessarily as positive or relevant to person Y.

In the late years, the manners in which political and business leaders have framed issues using misinformation has fragmented agreeability among users, fostering an environment of polarization (Vosoughi, Roy & Aral, 2019; Castells & Shirky, 2020). Also the efficiency of mediatized leaderships and civic mobilization has been shown to be greatly sensitive to the online freedoms specific to the context (e.g. China and its online surveillance laws) and therefore

it needs to be allowed by the systemic structures (Van Dijk & Hacker, 2021). Last but not least, mediatized leaderships' impact on civil society' s mental health and wellbeing has been a subject of criticism. The amount of time invested in digital engagement and the overwhelming scrutiny that actors go through which may impact their emotional and physical health (Castells & Shirky, 2020).

2.2.2.2 Diversity Enhancement

The term diversity enhancement denotes a societal improvement resulting from efforts, norms, and policies by societal actors aimed to increase the involvement of minority groups. The latter implies that these communities have been inherently disadvantaged and/or excluded from relevant decision-making procedures, obliged to adopt the majority' s behaviors and perspectives despite unmatching their ethnic, sociocultural, and sexual reality (Crenshaw, 1991; Bonilla & Silva, 2018). The lack of interest by dominant actors in involving marginalized communities has been consolidated within the systems throughout the decades, exhibiting notable division among society, and generally materializing itself into lower access to opportunities and worse prospects for these marginalized groups.

Taking into account the aforementioned definition on diversity enhancement and realizing the relevance of developing inclusive practices and outcomes, modern media' s involvement in improving these gaps has been essential to fight social inequality (Piketty, 2014). Organizational leaders have taken note of the instrumental role of digital media in facilitating a solution, and in combination with mounting public demands for higher considerations on diversity principles on their operations and functioning, it has forced leaders to take action (Marwick & boyd, 2011; Lyon, 2018). The consequences of greater inclusion in corporate practices have been demonstrated to drive an organization' s overall productivity, improve its image, and contribute significantly in helping others oppressed by the system (Ely & Thomas, 2001; Dickson, Den Hartog, & Mitchelson, 2003; Wang & Chang, 2015).

In regards to the manners in which mediatized leadership is utilized to enhance diversity in society, this roots from a complex and multifaceted relationship among them (Smith & Johnson, . The fact that digital media has enabled leaders to expand their audiences and networks with less resources in a shorter amount of time has greatly contributed to agenda setting powers

and the ability of spinning public discussion around topics in the social media arenas to organizations. (Avolio et al., 2009; Wang & Chang, 2015) In many cases, leaders through advertisement and promotion campaigns, have created significant awareness around highly stigmatized topics usually attributed to marginalized groups by society (Dickson et al., 2003; Avolio et al., 2009; Boydstun, 2013). The efficiency of media diffusion channels gave leadership the ability of defining priorities and opening up discussions through their content.

A good example of diversity enhancement by mediatized leaderships can be the Starbucks' Racial Bias Training. After allegations that Starbucks was engaging in racial profiling practices, the CEO of the company, Kevin Johnson, formalized a media coverage strategy where he and other employees participated in various workshops related to racial segregation and solutions to counteract it (Patel & Nguyen, 2022; Fischer; 2022). Overall, Johnson' s constant interaction with the audiences through Starbucks social media account not only protected the company' s reputation, but it also raised awareness on the importance of diversity enhancement efforts in the service industry sector (Patel & Nguyen, 2022; Fischer; 2022).
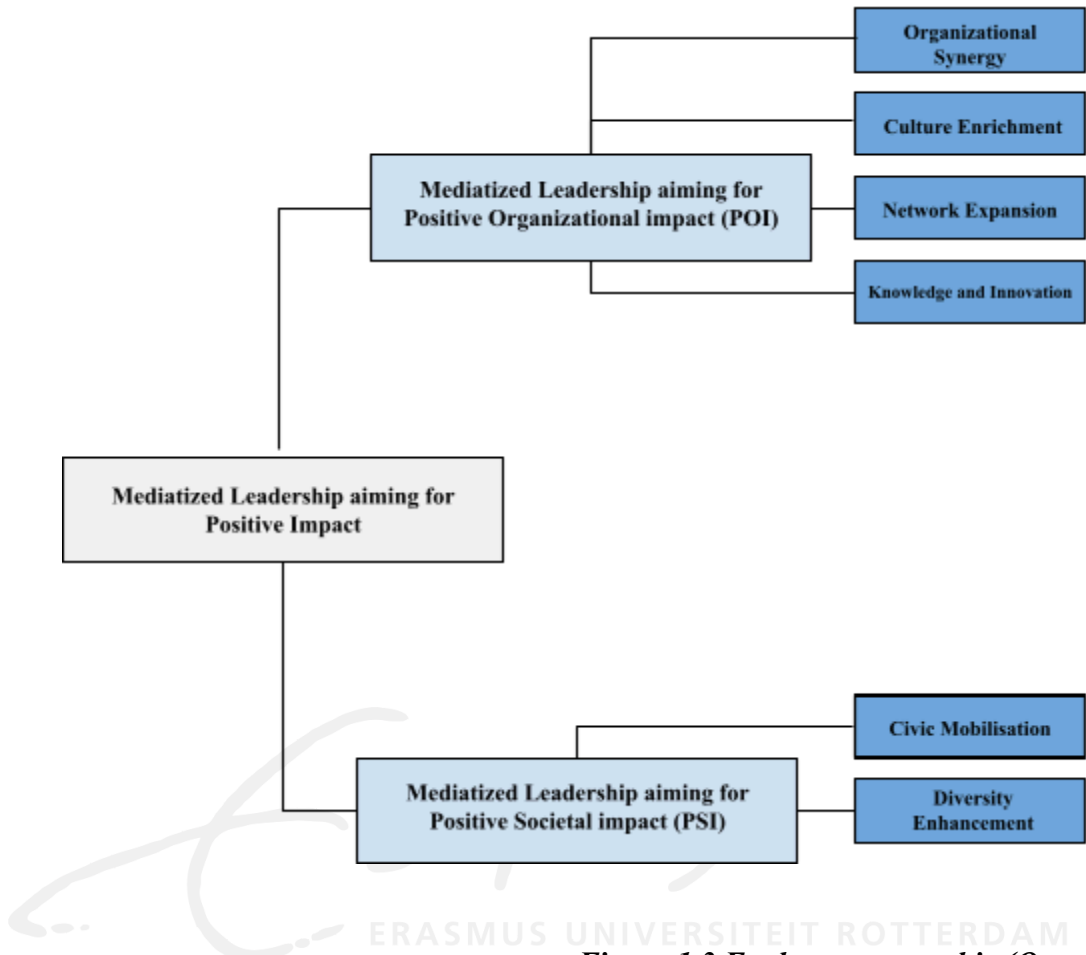
Figure 1.3 Explanatory graphic (Own creation)

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Qualitative methodology

This research employed a qualitative methodology (Alasuutari, 1996; Alvesson & Sandberg, 2011; Beije, 2010; Bansal et al., 2018; Bartunek et al., 2006; Buchanan & Bryman, 2007; Cunliffe, 2011; Figueiredo et al., 2017; Gioia et al., 2013). The focus was on carrying out reflexive qualitative research. This implied that "data" was viewed as "social construction" on the topics discussed created through interaction between the researcher (author) and the group under study (representatives of the social and business collectives). The goal of making use of a qualitative methodological approach was to obtain rich descriptions and insights on these individuals' experiences. This in hopes of unveiling their interpretation on the phenomenon studied, and note down attention-grabbing findings relevant to the study. (Boeije, 2010; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Rorty, 1979; Rosenau, 1992; Van Maanen, 1988), cited in (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2007, p. 1267).

3.2 Operationalization

In this particular research, mediatized leadership was defined as the use of digital media tools (social media platforms, collaboration tools, content creation among others) for leaders to enhance their practices aimed to formulate a positive impact in organizations and society. By understanding this concept' s dynamics it was possible to provide insights on the nuance of leadership practice in a modern mediatized context. The following dimensions were taken into account to develop the interview guide and explore these mediatized leadership practices:

1. **Digital communication strategies** (Hjarvard, 2009; Couldry & Hepp, 2013; Couldry & van Dijck, 2015): The types of digital media tools employed by leaders along with the purpose and frequency of their use. These tools referred primarily to social media, collaboration platforms, content creation, newsletters, etc…

2. **Engagement of relevant stakeholders** (Yip & Raelin, 2011, 2012; Couldry & Hepp, 2013; Raelin, 2019): The manners in which leaders maintained their networks of interaction with their coworkers and audience. Also, their self-perception on the level of engagement with relevant stakeholders.

3. **Innovation and situationality** (Fairhurst, 2009; Warner & Wager, 2021; Castels, 2011; Yip & Raelin, 2011, 2012; Raelin, 2019): Instances were digital media was employed to facilitate their leadership practices and their responses to the changing dynamics of their context.

4. **Leadership authenticity and presence** (Yip & Raelin, 2011, 2012; Couldry & Hepp, 2013; Raelin, 2019): Their personal experiences, stories, and varied knowledge input along with their perception, leadership transparency and authenticity in regards to the employment of media in their leadership practice.

Building on the previous conceptualisation of mediatized leadership, this research digged into **two (2) research scopes** that referred to the type of outcome resulting from these strategies. In the following table it was possible to entail the definitions and dimensions taken into account in the semi-structured interview guide and inquire the ways these practices were employed.

Positive Impact	Definition	Dimensions
Positive impact in Organizations	The group of beneficial effects experienced by the organization due resulting from the implementation of well-intentioned and efficient digital media practices.	**Synergy:** Increased cohesion and coordination among organizational members. **Performance:** Improvements in process and outcome efficiency. Optimizing resource allocation and minimizing risk. **Culture:** Consolidation of constructive norms and values. Transformation of detrimental behaviors and ideas through feedback loops.

		(Reckwitz, 2002; Carroll et al., 2008; Hjarvard, 2009; Castells, 2011; Couldry & Hepp, 2013; Couldry & van Dijck, 2015 Nonaka & Takeuchi, 2017; Avolio & Kahai, 2018; Du Pleiss, 2019; Kagermann & Wahlster, 2021)
Positive impact in Society	The collection of improvements in various societal realities and challenges, resulting from the employment of leadership practices in combination with digital media strategies.	**Community engagement:** Reinforcement of existing relationships and the consolidation of new ones. **Social awareness:** Sharing accurate knowledge and different ideas to prioritize social issues. Calls for behavioral change were needed. **Diversity and inclusion:** Bridging gaps of opportunity access by providing knowledge, outputs, and services to marginalized communities. Encouraging different perspectives and free discussions on issues

		(Kanter, 1999, Scherer & Palazzo, 2007;. Bennett & Stegberg, 2012; Earl & Kimpor, 2013; Xia, Munson, & Resnick 2016) .

1.1 Table: Operationalization

3.3 Data collection: Qualitative semi-structured interviews

The interviews were conducted in the fashion of "active interviewing" meaning that my role as researcher was to be the "interviewer" by asking the questions to the group selected, and enforcing the scopes of their responses established by the research (Holstein & Gubrium, 1997). Here, the focus was on responsive and open dialogue with the research participants in order to learn from them and construct meaning together. (Alvesson, 2003; Lopez et al., 2008) The process of interviewing will include a reflexive interpretation and management of the following challenges that have been established by previous research (Alvesson, 2003, p. 18):

1. The social problem of coping with an interpersonal relation and complex interaction in a nonroutine situation

2. The cognitive problem of finding out what it is all about (beyond the level of the espoused)

3. The identity problem of adopting a contextually relevant self-position

4. The "institutional" problem of adapting to normative pressure and cognitive uncertainty through mimicking a standard form of express

5. The problem (or option) of maintaining and increasing self-esteem that emerges in any situation involving examination and calling for performance (or allowing esteem enhancement to flourish in the situation)

6. The motivation problem of developing an interest or rationale for active participation in the interview

7. The representation/construction problem of how to account for complex phenomena through language

8. The "autonomy/determinism" problem of powerful macro discourse operating behind and on the interview subject

Besides the reflection and management of the aforementioned challenges, psychological tools such as rapport building were taken into account to facilitate the interaction between the researcher and the interview subject (Fontana, 2008; Horsfall et al., 2021). This demanded a full-disclosure on the theme studied and its purposes, along with honesty and sensibleness throughout the data collection procedures. As a result, the emergence and/or reinforcement of trust relationships will follow, increased the odds of useful and more objective results that help explore the topic inquired (Patton, 2002, Fontana & Frey, 2008)

3.4 Sample Description

Interview Sample Description Table		
Interview no. #	Creative role	Professional environment
Interviewee 1	Creative Director	Art production freelance
Interviewee 2	Head of Marketing	Student-lead Sustainability Association
Interviewee 3	Communications and Event Manager	Start-up research platform
Interviewee 4	Global Program Lead of a multinational's Climate and Nature Fund	Multinational company
Interviewee 5	Director of short-form creative content (music, videos, commercials and post-work) production	Art production start-up

Interviewee 6	Communications and project management	Start-up research platform
Interviewee 7	Content and digital marketing manager	Sustainability tech-startup
Interviewee 8	Chief Editor of Newsletter	Sustainable Fashion collective
Interviewee 9	Creative support	Non-profit Organization
Interviewee 10	PR strategist	Digital Marketing agency
Interviewee 11	Digital strategy developer	Queer rights organization
Interviewee 12	Junior digital strategy advisor	Consultancy firm
Interviewee 13	Fashion publicist	Queer fashion PR
Interviewee 14	Content Creator	NGO on harm reduction
Interviewee 15	Political marketing strategist	Political campaign

1.2 Table: Sample Description

3.5 Data interpretation and coding: Grounded theory & thematic analysis

The data interpretation drew from established procedures to work with qualitative data (Gehman et al., 2017; Gioia et al., 2013). Two broader frames that will inform this research are *thematic analysis* and *grounded theory.* The *thematic analysis* performed on the data collected includes reviewing the data collected and most importantly, finding patterns of information (themes), topics, and ideas that match existent concepts in literature, or that offer new perspectives relevant to the studied inquiry (Charmaz, 2003; Goulding, 2005). This implies a concise transcription, and a thorough consideration of the context in which the data collection took place. Thereafter, initial codes will be systematically labeled and categorized into more general patterns of

information in a three-step level process (open, axial, and selective coding respectively). Also known as the Glaserian Grounded Theory method. Is relevant to keep in mind the objectivity and transparency during the coding procedures to achieve a proper interpretation of the findings. (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Guest et al., 2014).

3.6 Research quality and ethics

Both the quality of information and ethical data collection are crucial components of scientific research (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell & Poth, 2010; Guest et al. , 2014). To ensure greater validity and reliability of the results, as well as to uphold research ethics, several considerations were implemented (Patton, 2002, Fontana & Frey, 2008; Gioia et al., 2013; Creswell & Poth, 2010).

In terms of enhancing the quality of findings, establishing rapport with interviewees increased the likelihood of obtaining useful and honest information. (Holstein & Gubrium, 1997; Fontana & Frey, 2008; Horsfall et al., 2021). Persistent observation during data collection allowed for the identification of details and nuances in the transcripts, aiding in a deeper understanding of the phenomenon (Fontana & Frey, 2008). Additionally, the transferability of the information was enhanced through thick descriptions and purposive sampling, which further improved the study's accuracy (Gioia et al., 2013).

Despite these efforts, it is important to self-reflect and acknowledge the limitations of qualitative explorations due to their lack of empirical certainty and subjectivity (Buchanan & Bryman, 2007; Cunliffe, 2011; Figueiredo et al., 2017; Mwitta, 2022). Recognizing these limitations is an ethical practice in research, as it enhances the study's transparency and reinforces its legitimacy. As the principal investigator, I ensured the proper handling of interviewees' data by securing transcripts and recordings in a locked file. Additionally, all participants received an informed consent form, which clearly explained the main theme of the interview and was provided prior to conducting the interviews (See Appendix A Consent form (sample)).

Chapter 4: Findings and discussion

This section presented the primary findings of the study resulting from the semi-structured interviews conducted to fifteen (15) participants in creative positions within organizations. The findings were illustrated with direct quotations from the interview transcripts, information supplemented by the researcher's observations and relevant contextual information. At the same time, a three-level (open/axial/selective) inductive analysis in the form of a *code tree* using the data collected was performed, organizing the information grouped as themes. These themes are set to answer the main research question of the present inquiry: **How is Mediatized Leadership practiced by creative(s) (managers) to enhance "positive impact" within their organizational structures and in society?** This through the separated exploration research scopes entailed by the two (2) sub questions proposed:

1. **How is Mediatized Leadership practiced by creative roles to enhance positive impact in organizations"?**
2. **How is Mediatized Leadership practiced by creative roles to enhance positive impact in society?**

The consolidation of the inductive analysis was seceded by an extensive discussion on the key findings and the emerging categories. By employing following the aspects below for developing a proper interpretation of the results, it was possible to inquire the ways in which Mediatized Leadership is practiced by creative roles to create improvements in their organizations and society (Charmaz, 2003, Goulding, 2005; Gioia et al., 2013, Guest & MacQueen, 2014; Gehman et al., 2017):

1) **Summary of key findings:** Reporting on the main results and determining their patterns.
2) **Interpretation of results:** Giving an explanation to the meaning of these relevant patterns in the findings, and contextualizing them with existent theories. Notwithstanding their relevance to the inquiry.

3) **Contrasting results with existing theories:** Identifying the most relevant similarities and differences between the emergent themes and the theoretically informed framework. Stating connections not previously known.

4) **Critical reflection:** Debating the strengths and the limitations of the arguments. Mentioning the potential implications for future research and practice.

5) **Research prospects**: Developing suggestions for new lines of inquiry.

4.1 Subquestion 1: How is Mediatized Leadership practiced by creative roles to enhance positive impact in organizations"?

In the following section, from the semi-structured interviews performed to fifteen (15) subjects holding creative positions were presented. The employment of digital media to facilitate their leadership strategies aimed at organizational improvements was the primary emphasis of the present discussion. By performing a thorough interpretation of the key interview quotes and other research observances it was possible to explore the meaning they carried. Alongside with the interpretation, this section also considered a detailed inquiry on the implications of the findings in the broader academic and societal context.

In essence, three (3) themes emerged from the inductive coding analysis to the interview transcripts: 1) Reinforcement of artistic entrepreneurship, 2) Higher practice reflexivity, and 3) Increased organizational synergy. The aforementioned themes are set to explain the organizational scope of the research, and will be discussed in the next paragraphs. For a proper overview of the discussion, the following components will be considered:

1. **Results**: Quotations, summaries, and research observances
2. **Discussion**: Interpretation of the results and their significance. Including a comparison on the similarities and differences with the theoretical framework, and highlighting new insights or confirmations.
3. **Implications:** Practical and theoretical implications of the findings.

Having clarified these section components, the first theme Reinforcement of Artistic Entrepreneurship discussion followed.

4.1.1 Reinforcement of Artistic entrepreneurship

As the theme title denoted, the Reinforcement of Artistic Entrepreneurship was a pattern among the information provided through the data collection process. This emerging concept revealed a common employment of digital media tools and platforms to support and develop their creative initiatives, projects, and ideas. This theme was divided into two (2) subcategories to group data based on their use purpose.

Simplification of content creation

"Just think about it, in the past you needed to have a full-on course on Adobe Photoshop or Illustrator to actually create quality content... nowadays with these features I can create it from my phone, at any time, and with fewer resources... Is great for a fashion publicist like me"

(Interviewee 13, 2024)

As the previous quote exemplified, the easy and free access to these tools has revolutionized the ways in which artists develop their work.

""Smaller companies are now able to make content that almost looks as good as larger companies with greater budgets thanks to digital media..."

(Interviewee 5, 2024)

As an art director in the music video industry, Interviewee 5 highlighted the opportunities these technologies have created for smaller competitors needing less resources to make their projects a reality.

The result patterns pointed out the relative ease that social media features provided various leaders in developing their content, thanks to the photo, video and audiovisual editing tools present in these platforms. These findings suggest that in the past, leaders dedicated to

content creation needed skills and knowledge on how to manipulate these tools. Moreover, the budget constraints of small players in the industries, particularly for startup projects, made financial resources an obstacle in fulfilling their vision.

The theories exposed in the academic framework such as the Better Knowledge Systems brought by digital media tools seem to match what is currently happening with the simplification of content creation, and through it enhancing artistic entrepreneurship. Avolio & Kahai (2018) hypothesized that the formalization of effective knowledge systems are fostering quality outcomes, efficient procedures, and optimization of resources. It also (partly) reminds of the Siemens 4.0 digital transformations in since it drove up output innovation and fostered greater dynamism, with the relevant distinction that the company dedicates itself to a different field away from content creation (Fost & Overhage, 2019; Kagermann & Wahlster, 2021; Warner & Wäger, 2021). Despite these similarities, the subjects seemed to respond to the social media editing features exclusively, disregarding the latest updates of Meta and ByDance including AI tools in their platforms, ignoring the potential threats of content creation simplification in fostering innovation as Leonardi & Vaddi (2022) brought up.

In regards to the practical implications of employing digital media tools to simplify content creation were a greater accessibility of small players to the market since there is no need of professional skills or sizable financial investments to produce quality content. Besides that, it also enhanced resource allocation since leaders can divert their budgets into other fields, and create audiovisual content efficiently. This at the same time enhances artistic entrepreneurship since it facilitates the development of content, and drives its competitiveness since high-quality output may enhance brand visibility and greater presence in the market.

The theoretical implications of this discussion rely on the validation of Avolio & Kahai's (2018) arguments in favor of better knowledge systems resulting from the employment of digital media tools, enhancing quality output and optimizing resource allocation. Nevertheless, Leonardi & Vaddi's (2022) concerns on artistic innovation in an ongrowing AI dominated environment should not be ignored, and new research dwelling on this matter is encouraged to safeguard a proper balance between digital media, leadership, and organizational improvement.

Creativity and inspiration

Besides the aforementioned theme, another way in which mediatized leadership practices foster artistic entrepreneurship is through the creative and inspirational potential of content made available through digital media. On this interviewee 1 (2014) writes the following:

"For me, involving social media practices is a way of communication, and what 's beautiful about it is that you can express certain ideas or concepts to different audiences... To me, it's in hand with art… I can express my art spirit. But it is also about other users' work… other people's work inspires me!"

The quote above acknowledges other uses by art leaders distinct from promoting their work, which refers to the creative inspiration to develop artistic projects.

"Critique drives our company...we're just starting, so our customer satisfaction surveys in social media it's the best way to grow and to enhance our outreach… By implementing the consumers feedback to not only improve our products but making them more unique.. Is a way to motivate ourselves to be better and act upon their interest".

This statement by interviewee 8 shows that inspiration can also come through the surveillance of digital marketing indicators rather than only other peoples' content.

Based on the previous quote, a relevant suggestion is the fact that leaderships didn't only seek to communicate their projects on these platforms, but they rather had a significant value in inspiring their work. This inspiration came in part from the enormous availability of content online, resembling a gallery for ideas. It also came as well from the audience's critique and feedback, which offered an opportunity for them to grow and work in meeting the customers needs.

The aforementioned interpretations, particularly the involvement of audience criticism on the products and/or services offered by interviewee 8 in social media, was in relation to the reinforcement on knowledge sharing environments brought by the implementation of ICTs in organizations. By knowledge sharing environments Nonaka & Takeuchi (2017) referred to a

strong exchange of information between stakeholders, which translated to the results obtained, customer feedback inspired improvement and innovation. It was also similar to the digital transformations experienced by Mayo Clinic, since in that case, executives got into contact with patients in order to understand their needs and address them ((Du Pleiss, 2019; Kagermann & Wahlster, 2021).

Overall, the practical implications of this discussion is highlighting the importance of using digital media practices to foster creativity and inspiration. These two components are crucial for enhancing artistic entrepreneurship and they are consolidated through the employment of feedback-driven improvement mechanisms, and the exposure to limitless content online. The academic implications are reinforcing the relevance of applying knowledge sharing environments as a principle to innovate in organizations (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 2017), and fostering greater engagement with stakeholders as a learning tool. Despite these confirmations, further insight on the duality of digital media in creativity is encouraged.

4.1.2 Enhanced practice reflexivity

The second theme that emerged from the inductive analysis from the interview transcripts was higher practice reflexivity. This theme aimed to group the impact that digital media exposure had on the way the subjects considered the creation of public value throughout the roll-out of their leadership strategies. This theme was separated into two subcategories: 1) Transparency and accountability, 2) Commitment to public value.

Transparency and accountability

Interviewee 2 remembered one occasion in which he accidentally included a wrong statistic in relation to cryptocurrencies and climate change. This was later noticed by a follower who called him out on the statistical inaccuracy. He immediately decided to eliminate the news post and edit it with the correct information despite the extra work and acknowledged his part in it. He states the following:

"We were criticized for posting this wrong information in the comments… and rightfully so. We had to delete the post and answer the comments to show our responsibility with the truth.

With that in mind, this reflexivity in their practice reminded me of the "glass-cage" metaphor discussed in the theoretical framework, which explains the alignment of values with public opinion (Castells, 2011). However, it is noteworthy that the interview subjects appeared to take their own initiative in becoming reflexive about their work and performance, even if that demanded acknowledging mistakes.

This showed high reflexivity from the side of interviewee 2, which suggests that crucial cultural elements such as transparency and accountability are not only enhanced by the broad exposure brought by digital media, but rather an understanding by mediatized leaderships on the extent of negative implications that amplifying misinformation carries.

This perspective closely aligns with the theories proposed by (Couldry & Hepp, 2013; Couldry & van Dijck, 2015), as higher practice reflexivity also contributes to the collectivism pillar emphasized by Leadership-As-Practice (LAP) scholars. Strengthening the trust relationship between media producers and audiences in doing so. However, these findings failed to explore the long-term contributions of media on leadership reflexivity, especially concerning the "glass cage" metaphor discussed in Castells (2011). With this, further research is encouraged on an extended exposure of an organization's actions through social media is subject to public scrutiny and debate.

4.1.3 Increased Organizational Synergy

The third theme that emerged from the data interpretation on the manners in which mediatized leadership is employed by the subjects to foster is in regards to the enhancement of organizational synergy. As discussed in the theoretical chapter, organizational synergy refers to the improvement of an organization's performance through strategies to increase communication, coordinate the development of tasks, and bring the various structural units under one organizational strategy.

The patterns demonstrated that the interviewees use media tools such as workflow software, communication channels of different kinds (e.g. direct messaging platforms), and omni channels that combine both communication and workflow. Based on this, platforms like Asana, Whatsapp, and audiovisual content on Microsoft aimed to formalize these synergies among parties, bridging gaps in knowledge and practice.

Communication efficiency and problem-solving

Evidence of the employment of media technologies for increasing the cohesion among members can be evidenced by the following statements of interviewee 12: *"We clearly have specific tasks assigned but, uhm, part of our leadership is to involve the media and make sure everyone is okay and performing in accordance."* Moreover, Interviewee 2 also employs direct messaging channels in order to reinforce the interdependencies among the members of his marketing team.

Synergies resulting from media are advantageous; overlapping and joining forces in projects, teams, and others within the organization. From my marketing leadership I try to build these interdependencies by communicating with my team members promptly through our omni channels.

(Interviewee 2, 2024)

As illustrated by the previous quotes, information patterns suggest that media is employed to enhance synergy among members, tasks, and ideas within these organizations. The use of communication technologies has proven beneficial beyond merely conveying messages promptly among employees (Ensign, 1998; Larsson & Finkelstein, 1999. Johansen & Frandsen, 2017; Pfeffer, 2018)

A surprising finding was in regards to the experience of Interviewee 12, who highlighted that communication and performance software tools have significantly reduced work burdens by detecting abnormalities in work progress and addressing these issues with supervisors. This proactive approach ensures smoother workflows and timely interventions, thereby fostering a more efficient and cohesive organizational environment. On this interviewee 12 (2014) states:

"My colleague wasn't doing well and she was "flagged" by this system… who communicated to the supervisors about the situation. She received professional counseling very fast, three days later she was back on track!"

Visualization of organizational strategy

Taking the initiative of solving problems through media demonstrates the potentials of mediatized leadership practices in improving employees wellbeing and the organizational performance by optimizing resources. Additionally, the employment of audiovisual media helped leaders in easily communicating their strategic mission and vision of projects hence increasing the synergy among stakeholders just as Larsson & Finkelstein (1999) and Pfeffer (2018) argued. On this, Interviewee 15 (2024) stated:

"In political branding images and videos are much more powerful than a billion words… even for us as a marketing team, designing a political campaign for a client is primarily based on what the electorate wants to see… we then use our best promotion visuals to persuade our client in choosing us and the electorate in choosing them"

(Interviewee 15, 2024)

Although the majority of participants embraced the use of media to improve communication, cohesion, and performance, a critical observation was the significant invasiveness these tools have brought into individuals' lives outside their professional settings. Additionally, the potential disruption caused by an excess of communication could negatively impact organizational operations and individuals' private lives. This raises concerns about the balance between leveraging digital tools for efficiency and maintaining personal boundaries to prevent burnout and preserve work-life balance.

"It's hard to say that I have an end of the day… Sometimes you get a message at 1am from someone, from one of your coworkers, you might have a difficulty with something, and then I always have this internal battle of if I should answer or if this is my private time"

(Interviewee 8, 2024)

As argued throughout this discussion, media communication tools are useful for enhancing organizational synergy. However, as Interviewee 8 noted out, there are some downsides. Interviewee 7 (2024) mentioned, "*I think the media is a tool that is like a double-edged sword. It can be very useful for communication within an organization, but it's hard to find a balance between under-communication and over-communication.*" This term "double-edged sword" reflects the beneficial and potentially harmful limits of mediatized leadership practices aimed at enhancing organizational synergy. It opens a potential line of inquiry into other implications of using media tools for this purpose, such as their invasiveness in personal lives and the risk of communication overload.
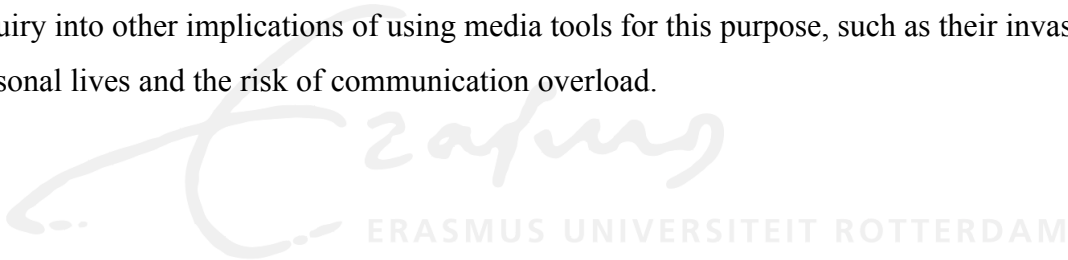
4.3 Subquestion no. 2:   How is Mediatized Leadership practiced by creative roles to enhance positive impact in society?

The current section offered my interpretation of the main findings regarding the effective combination of media and leadership practices by creative individuals aimed at improving their immediate societal environments. This discussion explores how these individuals leveraged the instrumental capabilities of media and their leadership skills to make positive contributions to society. Furthermore, their experiences were compared with the theories discussed in this paper's academic framework, highlighting relevant similarities and providing potential explanations for the emerging results.

In essence, two (2) themes emerged from the inductive coding analysis to the interview transcripts: 1) Social capital 2) Social Innovation The aforementioned themes are set to explain the societal scope of the research, and will be discussed in the next paragraphs. For a proper overview of the discussion, the following components will be considered:

4. **Results**: Quotations, summaries, and research observances
5. **Discussion**: Interpretation of the results and their significance. Including a comparison on the similarities and differences with the theoretical framework, and highlighting new insights or confirmations.
6. **Implications:** Practical and theoretical implications of the findings.

Having clarified these section components, the first theme Reinforcement of Artistic Entrepreneurship discussion followed.

Theme 1: Social capital

The findings of this inquiry underscored the relevant impact of mediatized leadership in leveraging social capital. Social capital denoted the networks, relationships, flows and norms that enhance collective and cooperative interactions within society. In this section a discussion took place in regards to the employment of social capital to promote improvements in various domains of society. For this purpose, the following two (2) sub themes were discussed: 1) Diversity and inclusion, and 2) Networking and engagement.

Diversity and Inclusion

Firstly, the use of digital media practices by the leaderships interviewed demonstrated a significant interest in fostering diversity and inclusion. The employment of social media platforms provided an instrumental advantage to the subjects in reaching out underrepresented and marginalized communities online. The case of Interviewee 11 is particularly interesting, since it exemplifies the potentials of mediatized leadership practices in amplifying messages of support, and solidarity to include vulnerable communities.

"What working in social media has shown me is that it reflects our societal divides… logically the queer community online is no exception to it. Since we decided to formalize a social media account on Instagram, we were able to visualize the real toll of homophobia… and raise awareness on the fact that gay teens are 7 times as likely to commit suicide… we hope that getting this message along helps to change this horrific reality."

As the previous quote visualizes, employing social media to inform about the gruesome extent that hate phenomena like homophobia have in society can generate a sense of urgency in stepping up and mobilizing change. This aligns to the arguments of Bennett & Segebberg (2012) in the sense that mediatized leadership practices orientated to communicate a sense of need can foster change where necessary. Besides this, another common use of social media by the leadership was the visualization of different communities, and an open debate that included diversity of perspectives. Interviewee 8 (2014) writes the following.

"The war in Israel and Palestine has divided many of us… big companies really take care of what they say to not take sides… this is becoming more hard for them because the people online are demanding a concrete stand… just as us we've taken the side of human rights distributing charities and reporting on protests"

The aforementioned example reminds of the meaning-building instances that digital arenas in social media provide to the audiences to speak their opinions despite the differences (Couldry & Hepp, 2013; Couldry & van Dijck, 2015; Wang & Chang, 2015). Nevertheless, a concern and a potential line of further study is the potential fragmentation of society in agreeing to definitions and perceptions of reality. The political context in western democracies also coincide with this phenomenon thus, dwelling on the long-term implications of diversity oriented practices to foster is encouraged.

Networking and engagement

Another pattern of information present in the data sample was the use of digital media tools by leaders to enhance their networks and by doing so, engaging with various communities online and offline. The primary tool that stood up for this purpose was again social media, specially LinkedIn which is commonly employed to develop academic and professional relationships with other users. The formulation of networks could be seen as a crucial part of social capital since it expands the horizon of academic, professional, and transformational experiences to societal actors. (Couldry, 2008; Castells, 2011; Bennett & Segerberg, 2013, Chadwick, 2013; Westerman, Bonnet & McAfee, 2014)

It also serves as a platform to promote initiatives that seek support of a specific type of audience that is hard to find without a previous network or resources (Kluemper, 2013). Interviewee 3 works for a collective dedicated to transforming conventional research by involving creative scholars, building a network with them, and promoting their studies through their newsletter.

"The way we expand our community is through our newsletter and overall, I' m satisfied with how it has performed... The way we actually grow it is through our personal contacts but with all the burden of personal communication and the fact that we have a high workload on our backs Linkedin has served a great purpose in keeping this up while we also take care of other things."

(Interviewee 3, 2024)

Since LinkedIn is an app built for professional networking purposes, it is unsurprising that it has become the "to-go" tool for leadership. Its practicalities like a detailed overview on the users' academic and working experiences, besides their professional and scientific interests, has facilitated building relationships with new individuals. This matches with Castells (2011) and his argument of networking being one of the main uses of digital media by organizational leaderships.

Despite this outcome, it reflects the way in which academic spheres rely on this digital media tool rather than the in-person "old fashioned" manners such as attending lectures, coffee meet-ups and conventions. According to Kluemper (2013), this reliance opens the door to issues with employment verifiability since it is harder for organizations to distinguish over-inflated academic achievements, and thus the quality of output in academia and the professional opportunities to actors in society. This opens a line for future research of network social practices and its effect on the overall consolidation of quality research and fair competition for opportunities.

Theme 2: Social innovation

The second theme that emerged from the data analysis was the employment of mediatized leadership practices to drive social innovation. As noted, interviewees consistently highlighted the importance of using digital media technologies as tools for developing their initiatives and projects, aiming to address existing challenges through creativity, authenticity, and a commitment to sustainability. The determination of these patterns as "social innovation" roots from the similarities between the data collected and existing scientific research surrounding the creation of new social practices aiming to offer alternative strategies to tackle challenges.

Breaking down stigma

As a researcher, it is crucial to set aside personal biases to maintain the objectivity of the discussion. However, as someone currently undergoing rehabilitation and learning from first-hand workers in the field of harm reduction, I believe it is my responsibility—both as an academic and a human being—to help address a major (proven) factor that worsen this issue: the stigma surrounding substance use disorders many of who, already belong to marginalized

communities.   In line with this, Interviewee 14, a social worker at a harm reduction organization in Bogota, has taken a proactive stance against addiction stigma. Through his role as an online social worker, he has committed his efforts in creating a platform on social media where he shares accurate knowledge about what addiction entails, responsible substance use, and the importance of normalizing these discussions in Colombian society. Interviewee 14 (2024) states the following:

"Through social media we aim to explain to people how to take drugs safely. Not to promote their use, but by being real. Drugs have become a reality in our society… we want to reduce the negative effects of ignorance… we need to avoid what's going on in North America"

Although harm reduction strategies online are relatively a new phenomenon, they can't come any earlier. Interviewee 14 made a note referring to the opioid overdoses epidemic in the United States and Canada, which has taken the life of around one hundred thousand lives in 2023 according to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) (2024). Many scientific scholars agree that the lack of knowledge around this issue has had its toll, particularly in the younger populations who are less aware of the dangers of illegal drug consumption. Therefore, this social innovation brought by Interviewee 14 satisfies that gap by speaking to the younger segments of the audience and making information about health widely available.

Bottom-up climate change awareness
Moreover, overly-discussed matters that have seen little improvement are also a niche where mediatized leaderships can social innovate and with it, positively impact society. To give some context, the United Nations report on Climate Change (2023) stated that curving global warming below 1.5 degrees celsius is not achievable. This represents a significant risk for humanity since the scenarios projected by experts on the field are dire in terms of extreme weather, resource depletion, and natural extinction.

Aware of this, Interviewee 2 dedicated his leadership efforts in counteracting climate change through a bottom-up media initiative. Titled "Change News" it brings to the Erasmus University student community information about the latest updates on the fight against climate

change. These short but effective news posts are new in the university community, since before one had to sign up to the school's sustainability letter packed with information and less updated.

"Our goal is to broaden students' perspective and people's knowledge on different sustainability topics away from the less entertaining and overwhelming climate reports… we want to bring it simple but objective to promote change"

(Interviewee 2, 2024)

4.4 Challenges for Mediatized Leaderships to achieve Positive Impact

A crucial aspect of qualitative research analysis is maintaining an openness to information that deviates from (expected) outcomes. Identifying and categorizing unexpected findings as worthy of exploration roots from the study objectives, ensuring a thorough and nuanced analysis (Boeije, 2010; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Rorty, 1979; Rosenau, 1992; Van Maanen, 1988). With this in mind, this section emerged from the data collection and interpretation of the subject's experiences related to eventualities perceived as obstacles in their practice to achieve improvements within their organizations and society.

With this in mind, the following three (3) themes were found to generally condense the nature of these challenges: *1) Technological challenges, 2) Cultural dilemmas,* and *3) Market problems*.

In the next paragraphs we explored these issues by involving an interpretation of their experiences of the participants and their context. For this, we dwelled on existing literature that explained the essence of this happenings and closely looked at the implications of these challenges in the broader practice of mediatized leadership. Furthermore, we accounted for the potential negative implications in organization and society, and reported solutions from the subjects to overcome these difficulties. Lastly, a connection to these research objectives was performed to comprehend the relevance of this emergent theme to the inquiry *(see section 1.3 Aim of study, p. 8).*

4.4.1 Technological challenges

Undoubtedly, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a relatively new technological development in modern society thus, its immediate revolutionary application potentials in simplifying life as we know it comes with a general fear of the uncertainties surrounding these transformational innovations. AI's core advantage over previous inventions is the ability to self-learn, meanwhile perfectioning its behavior and decision-making skills to achieve a specific task assigned; generally aimed to improve operational efficiency.

A cross sectional negative implication of digital media is the polarization of online audiences in social media. These platforms are powered by preference-based algorithms which ultimately shape the user's content, their network and interactions. They do so by collecting patterns of consumption, which are naturally tied up to their commercial, political, and cultural preferences which will be stored and later reproduced into a designed experience. In the late years, the exacerbation of ideological divisions among social groups virtually, and the great increase in online violence have emerged as long-run potential consequences of these media self-learning tools. Interviewee 2 (2024) states the following:

"The challenging aspect of self-learning algorithms in current leadership that audiences prefer and therefore shown of a line of engaging content that with their content make awareness through boring scientific facts hard to go through… particularly in my role as a sustainability creative leader, this messaging is not that simple to break down"

With this quote, the subject wanted to convey that mediatized leaders willing to educate and mobilize society through a science-based message are limited by the preference-based algorithms which logically gives advantage to exciting content over less engaging but substantial information on relevant problems. According to Boykoff & Boykoff (2017), social media has previously shown to be keen in combating climate change and the promotion of sustainable practices. Nevertheless the reproduction of banal content by these self-learning algorithms makes it difficult to leverage the competition between engagement and awareness efforts on global warming. (Boykoff & Boykoff, 2007; Moser & Dilling, 2011).

As senior leader at a multinational firm' s sustainability program, Interviewee 5 is in charge of commercializing green projects and initiatives to investment funds. He stated the following on AI tools in B2B marketing: *"AI is guilty for recognizing patterns that work and then repeating them because they demonstrated prior success… it perpetuates the cycle of oversimplification, under rationalization of projects."*(Interviewee 5, 2024). Boston & Yukodvsky (2011) warns that the oversimplification of complex tasks brought by AI tools, and the reproduction of risk-averse decisions can limit the scope of critical thinking and innovation in the business sphere.

After discussing the accounts of the participants, and contextualizing their experiences to the broader media landscape it was possible to identify the essence of the technological challenges preventing their leaderships from positively impacting their organizations and society. These obstacles are primarily related to the immediate improvements in output efficiency and process simplicity brought by these AI tools since less operational resources are needed.

However, this short-term efficiency provided by these technologies may well be shattered by the lack of knowledge on the long term implications of media self-learning machinery as the subjects of study mentioned and as Boston & Yukodvsky (2011) have argued. The positive employment of media and leadership has been highly disrupted by the self-learning algorithms which by design fulfill efficiency goals through rational decision-making, and disregard the collateral damages in society as exemplified by the digital audiences' unawareness on the climate crisis, and the risk-averse choices that oversimplify and limit creativity in the organizational domain.

4.4.2 Cultural dilemmas

The roles of ethical principles and moral standards in leadership are crucial for the sustainability and success of an organization. These sets of norms and values shape the leader's decision-making and behavior, which naturally will impact the organization's social environment. Leaders' actions and ethical standards serve as models for employees, who often emulate these behaviors in their own productive performance. This replication helps establish a consistent and positive organizational culture, reinforcing ethical practices throughout the operations.

With this in mind, the sizable impact in the organization' s environment can be equally translated to the external societal context, such as the creation of value and the consolidation of transformational solutions. Nonetheless, modern media's powerful platform has amplified leaders' influence on a globalized scale, making more than ever the adherence of mediatized leaderships to constructive norms and values consequential to avoid detrimental effects in organizations and society.

The subjects observed a concerning pattern of irresponsible employment by other leaderships in diffusing premeditated information campaigns aimed to weaponize and manipulate audiences (particularly in social media) into specific agendas framed by corporate or political interests. Interviewee 2 writes the following:

"I think that people are more connected to news on what's happening globally than they were

before, but with social media on the rise, the quality of information has significantly gone

down… They have become charged with less factual knowledge, with a toxic misinformation

distributed by not very ethical influencers"

(Interviewee 2, 2024)

On this, the term "misinformation" is described by George & Lakhani (2019) as the distribution of misleading, false, and baseless information regardless of the intent to deceive. However, as interviewee 2 beliefs that emerging mediatized leaderships in social media under the term "influencers", have disregarded the importance of truth in exchange of perhaps greater engagement from their audiences or personal gain distant from societal wellbeing. Although the manipulation of reality has been evidenced throughout history with dark examples like the propagandistic brainwash during Nazi Germany, or the ideological battle during the Cold War, the modern dilemma on leadership culture is exacerbated by the expansive and reinforcing properties of digital media. Interviewee 9 (2024) states:

"[Unspecified online leaders] it's definitely a big hurdle… they don't have the best intentions on

social media, especially on Tiktok… They just put anything out there to create a greater reach…

they just bend their morals in a way, I guess, and put out stuff that is damaging for our company'

s reputation"

To offer some context on the previous quote, interviewee X referred to an unnamed online user with a sizable amount of followers that was baselessly attacking a supposed collaboration of the sustainability fashion magazine she runs in Germany. It turned out to be less hazardous than initially expected for the firm, thus no charges were brought against this individual. This makes us think about the lack of forgiveness that social media and other media channels can bring upon a company' s reputation by perpetuating any information regardless of its veracity.

From the one hand it seems pertinent that companies care for their image since this according to Schein (2010) has led to a greater establishment of the collective interest over financial outcomes. Examples of the aforementioned can be greater inclusion and diversity in their organizational practices and output like in the fashion industry; a domain greatly criticized by its adherence to traditional beauty standards and gender roles. Nevertheless, the unforgiving perpetuity of content on social media, the corporate leader's assumptions on public perception and the missing out on opportunities to innovate and learn has built a culture of minimizing risks at all costs.

In retrospect, there are multiple cultural challenges that mediatized leaderships face in their efforts to foster positive impact in their organizations and society. Firstly, the role of misinformation brings consequential damage to organizational actors and society. The fragility of an organization' s image is evident in a world where media shows itself as a collector and distributor of all kinds of content to a globalized audience. This has reinforced the difficulty of getting important messages through to the audiences, and evidenced the interests of a group of actors in engagement over factual data. Moreover, the fears for reputation damage by firms due to social media content and advertisement has developed a risk-averse culture, where efficiency is significantly reduced and innovation is limited to comply with assumptions on public perception. Despite the "safety" that the path dependent approval strategy might offer and the positive effects in diversity and inclusion, it makes media entrepreneurship a lot harder.

Besides having a sizable impact in the organization' s environment, it can enable contributional outcomes in the external context through value creation in the industry, communities and the overall societal context. Scholars have forecasted a paradigm shift in organizational leadership culture over the past decades, a change largely driven in part by the media's powerful platform, which has amplified leaders' influence across various audiences. It is therefore increasingly relevant to include constructive norms and values in the practice of mediatized leaderships

4.4.3 Market problems

As argued throughout this inquiry, the changes brought by mediatization in organizational and socioeconomic activities have been revolutionary by simplifying in many cases output production, enhancing organizational performance, and creating numerous channels to incentivise its productivity and consumption patterns. Moreover, this demassification of the media has brought more niche, community-based, and specific content to the audiences, providing a more diverse landscape and personalized media landscape.

A clear example is the digitalisation of advertisement through digital marketing in social media, website outlets, and email campaigns. It has also given a chance to smaller competitors in voicing their ideas, selling their products and increasing their revenue by reaching broader audiences online. However, the market competition fallacies still persist for producers in various industries, particularly those who dedicate their work to content creation as small entrepreneurs or freelancers.
Interviewee 1 states the following:

"I've worked a lot in the music video industry and they are broken…. really. One would think things have changed with social media and streaming platforms but the truth is that there's no money. Especially for independent artists… They don't have a label to back them up…it's like this cycle of failure."

(Interviewee 1, 2024)

After learning about her background, I discovered that Interviewee 1 is a freelancer based in Los Angeles. She attended a prestigious film school and has accumulated three years of experience in the field of Art Direction. Hence I was surprised to listen to her perspective describing a dire reality for small media entrepreneurs in a modernized industry and in the so-called "Mecca of entertainment". After dwelling on this case multiple realizations came along about persisting hardships for smaller competitors despite the revolutionary changes that the demassification of media has brought along.

A popular case that came to mind is the criticism towards Spotify. It relates back to the quote of Interviewee 1 since the biggest streaming platform of music worldwide has been frequently accused of undercompensating artists through their low-paid royalties. At the same time, new artists' income is increasingly depending more on their performance on online platforms (including streaming services) to build a fan base and consolidate projects with label companies. In retrospect, this suggests that small music entrepreneurs will keep having economic struggles and great uncertainty on their future.

Besides the lack of funding and unfair compensation by bigger players in the media as visualized by Interviewee 4, Interviewee 5 shared an observance from his role as leader of a production start-up on what he describes as an "excess of competition" at the lowest level of the industry.

"Smaller companies are now able to make content that almost looks as good as larger companies thanks to digital media… but the larger players have well-established market positions unlike us… the race to adapt is fueled by fears of not getting any work"

(Interviewee 5, 2024)

It is worth noting that although Interviewee 5 acknowledges the practical benefits of digital media in content creation, he suggests that the widespread access to these tools by smaller actors has homogenized the quality of output. Anderson (2006) makes sense of this market phenomena through the Long-tail theory, hypothesizing that despite the democratization of media tools for start-ups and entrepreneurship, this has driven an oversaturation of content in the

market. This, in turn, makes it more challenging to stand out in a market crowded with many small, rapidly adapting competitors.

Overall, I encountered various market difficulties posing barriers to mediatized leaderships in their pursuit of positive impact. On the one hand, there are persistent issues related to lack of financial support to artists in the form of low investment and unfair compensation for their work. Additionally, the unintended consequences of the democratic access to media tools to small competitors has created an oversaturation of undifferentiated content that crowds competition for projects at the lowest level, leaving well-established larger businesses untouched and solidifying a disparity among market levels.

The aforementioned hardships reduce their odds of successfully making a difference through their well-intentioned and activist work. This pattern of challenges, exemplified by interviewees 4 and 5, illustrates the obstacles that smaller and newer entrepreneurs face when attempting to bring innovation and sustainable outcomes to the market. Despite their talents and resilience, these mediatized leaders find that their efforts alone are insufficient. Solutions at the macro level, addressing market structure, are necessary to ensure fairer and more equal competition opportunities for all market participants.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 Summary of findings

From one side, it helped us understand the nuanced ways in which leaders employ digital media to positively impact their organizations. Based on the interview patterns and its preceding analysis, it was possible to evidence the employment by these leadership roles of media strategies aimed to reinforce their artistic entrepreneurships. The inclusion of content creation features in social media platforms optimized the time and minimized the importance of editing skills to consolidate professional content. These practices were equally employed to leverage market barriers for small competitors, facilitating success in their entrepreneurial projects through greater exposure. Moreover, artistic entrepreneurship efforts were set to ignite inspiration and creativity for procedures and output.

Another manner of employing mediatized leadership to generate improvements in their organizations was through increasing the involvement of practice reflexivity in their practice. The growing interest for public opinion surveillance and an alignment to morally accepted principles protected the organizations from reputational damage and related hazards. Customer satisfaction surveys, investment in long-term relationships with audiences and visualization of values like transparency and accountability, were crucial components to enhance reflection by these leaders.

Furthermore, mediatized leadership practices directed to increase synergy within organizations was another way in which improvements in organizations took place. Larsson & Frinkelstein (1999) defined organizational synergy as the enhancement of an organization' s performance through the combined and collective effort set into place by members of the designated structure. In this study, synergy was achieved through the implementation of omni channels for productivity, as well as messaging tools. These digital media channels and softwares ramped up communication between organizational members, forecasted potential issues, and addressed them in a prompted manner. The overall goal of synergistic practices were to increase the cohesion on task development, transfer of knowledge, and boost organizational efficiency.

Responding to the social scope of the inquiry, this research' s findings aimed to improve our understanding of the precise manners in which leaders employ digital media to generate

improvements in society. The findings discussion revealed that leadership strategies involved digital media to consolidate social capital. This emerging concept intersected with Portes' (1998) definition as the reinforcement of networks, relationships, flows and norms that enhance collective and cooperative interactions within society. Acknowledging the amplifying advantages of social media in fostering change as expressed by Bennett and Segerberg (2012), leaders made use of it to call out support on societal causes. The participation of these organizations in the digital arenas contributed to the momentum of these social causes, involving solidarity, factual knowledge and varied perspectives to build diversity and inclusion in audiences.

Besides the involvement of mediatized leadership practices to foster social capital, it was possible to establish that leaders employed digital media with the purpose of social innovation. Since social innovation refers to the formulation of new solutions to existing challenges, this theme included initiatives and entrepreneurial projects characterized by their novelty and uniqueness. These practices were reflected in the use of social media platforms and distribution of creative content aiming to tear down stigma surrounding controversial topics while offering an alternative strategy to deal with the issue as visualized by harm reduction campaigning online and student-led initiatives for sustainability.

In ensuring a thorough and nuanced analysis of the phenomenon at hand, a discussion on the perceived challenges by the subjects on the effectiveness of their employment of digital media to foster positive organizational improvements study was performed. The study found issues in three (3) main areas: technology, culture, and market. The technological challenges hampering the roll-out of mediatized leadership practices are in relation to the growing reliance of organizations in delivering decision-making power to AI tools in an effort to avoid risk (Boston & Yukodvsky, 2011). Besides that, the social media' s preference based algorithms seem to prioritize content engagement, rather than less attractive but knowledgeable information crucial to enhance sustainability practices (Boykoff & Boykoff, 2007; Moser & Dilling, 2011).

In line with the aforementioned, cultural dilemmas also limited the effective performance of mediatized leadership practices. Despite digital media tools reinforcing value as it did with leadership reflexivity, it is relevant to remain skeptical on its benefits, particularly when best-practice and constructive intentions of its deployment are not of principal interest by leaders online. Likewise, the persistence of market barriers limited the extent of mediatized leaderships since the findings suggested an undercompensation for creatives work, lack of investment in

entrepreneurial projects by bigger actors, and excessive competition among smaller market actors. This finding contrasted with the ability of mediatized leaderships to leverage the market, suggesting that although there is a general acknowledgment on the platform potentials of employing digital media, economic factors deterred these efforts.

5.2 Implications of study

The practical implications of the study root from the transformative potentials of employing a strategic use of mediatized leadership practices in fostering improvements in organizations and society. As this research evidenced, the employment of digital media by leadership is complex, however the outcomes in organizations can be beneficial as it can increase synergy within the organization, promote artistic entrepreneurship and foster greater cultural value through practice reflexivity. Moreover, a knowledgeable employment of these practices can enhance social capital through greater diversity and inclusion, and network engagement. Besides this, it provides an overview of the technological, cultural, and market obstacles that may hamper the effectiveness of mediatized leadership in fostering positive outcomes.

The scientific implications of the inquiry relate to its contribution in consolidating knowledge on the evolving fields of organizational management sciences and away from traditional study approaches. It helps to portray the state of media in the organizational sphere, as well as providing insights on how to combine the (proven) efficiency of situational leadership and the potentials of digital media strategies in practice (Fairhurst, 2009; Warner & Wager, 2021; Castels, 2011; Yip & Raelin, 2011, 2012; Raelin, 2019). Along with that, its findings on fields like reflexiveness and entrepreneurship can serve to comprehend the dynamics of digital media in ethical and entrepreneurial leadership. Lastly, it cautiously expands on the rising challenges on the employment mediatized leadership practices, opening the door for theories on the limitations brought by modern media in leadership.

5.3 Limitations

In regards to the limitations of this study, the methods utilized in the inquiry, qualitative research always carries issues with validity since the interpretation of the findings are subjected to the researcher' s understanding (Buchanan & Bryman, 2007; Cunliffe, 2011; Figueiredo et al., 2017; Mwitta, 2022). Despite reporting no biases that might compromise the outcomes impartiality up

to this point of the investigation, certainty is not guaranteed. Additionally, another limitation was the sample size. A sample size of fifteen (15) participants demonstrated to satisfy the minimum requirements but fell short in creating a generalizable explanation of the phenomenon. The complex dynamics of technological development between nations and regions varies significantly according to Hjarvard (2008) & Hepp (2013).

5.4 Recommendations for future research

This inquiry encourages academia in dwelling on the extent to which mediated leadership practices aimed to enhance artistic entrepreneurship contribute in improving creativity and innovation in organizations. This roots from the concerns of copyright violations and the authenticity of content online Moreover, the cautious invitation to overly optimistic perceptions of mediatized leadership practices in enhancing reflexivity hopes to promote research in risk averse behaviors by organizations due to the reputational exposure of their presence in social media.

In regards to the acknowledged methodological limitations of this study, it is encouraged to increase the size of the sampling. This will ensure greater generalizability of the results, and perhaps uncover new manners that remained explored by the inquiry and existing literature Taking into account the affirmations of Hepp (2013) on the importance of the media landscape on mediatization studies, involving a more diverse sample in terms of setting while nuancing external context factors like culture and technology development can help emphasize the role of locality in the roll-out of mediatized leadership practices.

5.5 Concluding remarks

To conclude, this study shedded light on the ways mediatized leadership practices can foster improvements in organizations and society. By exploring this matter, it was possible to formulate greater theoretical understanding in how to strategically coordinate digital media technologies and leadership positions. Additionally, the separated research scope provided a comprehensive view of the topic, examining its dynamic interplay within both organizational and societal contexts. Furthermore, The multifaceted approach underscored throughout this inquiry evidenced the potentials of digital media in fostering innovation, enhancing communication, and supporting

social causes, opening the door for creative inclusiveness and effectiveness of leadership practices in the digital age.

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Appendix A

Topic list

Topic heading	Issue(s) discussed
Participants' characteristics	*Discussions surrounding their interests and motivations of their role.* *Answering questions in relation to the research that participants had.* *Insights on their background (academic or professional)* *Time experienced in their organizations*
Context specifics	*Information regarding their industry field.* *Discussions on the latest developments relevant to their context.* *Inquiring on any relevant data to picture the participant's context.*
Organizational insights	*Main tasks and functions of the organization* *Positioning the organization in the broader industry field* *Structures and power distribution in their organizations* *Satisfaction with the organizational performance*
Role specific questions	*Asking for a detailed description on their functions within the organization* *Time experienced in their role* *Satisfaction with their role* *Insights on rights and obligations within their role* *Details on their leadership strategy and satisfaction of their leadership*
Media and mediatization	*The shifts that various digital media have brought in their context*

	The reliance of organizations and individuals in media tools
	Personal definitions on media
	Participants experiences in a mediatized contexts
Use of digital tools	*Types of media tools employed in their leadership strategy*
	Prioritization of media tools over other aspects
	Reliance of their strategy on media tools
	Experiences based on their use of media
Leadership perceptions	*Perceptions on leadership definition*
	Collectivism
	Involvement of other members in their leadership
	Assessment on their leadership
Assessment of media tools	*Extent of media' s functionality in accomplishing their strategies*
	Challenges emerging from using these tools
	Performance indicators
	Short-term vs long-term implications
Internal communication	*Communication tools employed by leaderships*
	Assessment of communication efficiency
	Communication between organizational levels
	Use of omni channels
	Efficiency in detecting and assessing emergent issues
Organizational cohesion	*Closeness of the leaders with other coworkers*
	Care for other members
	Alignment on the organizational goals
	Importance of cooperation among members
	Accessibility of digital media tools in formalizing cohesion

Simplification of tasks	*Efficient development of tasks through media tools*
	Insights on performance analysis of media tools
	Task distribution simplification
	Training and learning
	Resource optimization
Strategic vision	*Overall description of leaders strategy*
	Goals and objectives proposed
	Involvement of other voices in goal development
	Communication of goals and objectives to other members
	Alignment of these objectives to the broader societal interest
	Evaluation and feedback loops on media employment in leader strategy
Organizational culture	*Values and norms within the organization*
	Promotion by the leadership of these values
	Reproduction of behaviors
	Decision-making rationale
	Adaptability of organizational culture to their context
	Noted differences with other organizations and their cultures
	Highlight of media in transforming cultural values and norms
Assessment on leadership	*Transparency and accountability facilitated by media's exposure*
	Better overview on leaders and members performance
	Self-reflection on performance
	Openness to feedback and channels to do so
Social causes	*Commitment in fostering public value*
	Mobilization of audiences and members to support a cause
	Essence of the cause supported by leaders
	The "why of" the cause support by the leaders

	Understanding of expansive characteristics of social media
Community engagement	*Media and its role in blurring power divisions* *Openness of audiences feedback to organization' s performance* *Consideration of channels to communicate with their audience* *Customer satisfaction* *Long-term relationships with customers* *Importance of image in modern media* *Development of new contacts* *Collaboration with external partners*
Diversity in work	*Involvement of different visions and perceptions in media platforms* *Effects of digital globalization* *Bridging societal gaps through enhancing communication* *Fostering greater inclusion in content* *Acknowledging potentials of diversity*
Challenges of media in leadership	*Setbacks of social media misinformation and fake news* *Uncertainties of Artificial Intelligence (AI)* *Life-balance considerations* *Reputational damage* *Risk aversive behavior* *Digital media polarization* *Invasiveness in privacy*
Solutions to challenges	*Leader's opinions in "ways out"* *Previous experiences with similar challenges* *Examples of other mainstream leaders*

(Table Appendix A. Topic List)

Semi-structured interview guide

1. What is specific to your context?
2. How long have you been involved with this context?
3. What is your role within the organization?
4. What are the creative functions entailed in your role?
5. Overall, how satisfied are you with your position at the organization?
6. From your nt of view, how would you describe the organization's overall performance?
7. How would you define media?
8. What kind of media technologies are utilized in your working context?
9. How often do you make use of media in your context?
10. What implications can you observe from the media inside your context?
11. What consequences can you observe from the media outside your context?
12. What is the role of media in your context?
13. What advantages has the media brought within your context?
14. What disadvantages has the media brought within your context?
15. How would you describe the media's influence in your context?
16. What do you make out of the term "mediatization"?
17. What is leadership for you?
18. How do you view leadership in your context?
19. How important is leadership in your context?
20. Do you see yourself as a leader? If yes, explain.
21. What is positive leadership for you?
22. What is negative leadership for you?
23. What characteristics would you find in leadership within your context?
24. What are your views on the relationship between leadership and power?
25. What are your thoughts on the role of risk-taking and leadership?
26. What are your thoughts on the role of collaboration and leadership?
27. What are your thoughts on the role of reflexive learning and leadership?
28. What are your thoughts on the role of collectivism and leadership?
29. What are your thoughts on leadership as an iterative process?
30. What are your thoughts on leadership as a skill rather than a trait?
31. What do you make out of the term "mediatized leadership"?
32. How does media and leadership interact in your context?
33. What differences can you observe from traditional leaderships?
34. How do you balance maintaining an authentic leadership style with the need to manage your public image in the media?
35. How aware are you of the media and leadership in your context?
36. How sensitive do you think the media is to leadership?
37. What type of media training do your leaders undergo to effectively communicate with the public and media outlets?

38. How sensitive do you think is leadership to the media?
39. How reliant do you think the media is to leadership in your context?
40. How reliant do you think leadership is to the media in your context?
41. Do you think the media and leadership are positive compliments to one another? Explain
42. Do you think the media and leadership are obstacles to one another? Explain
43. How does leadership employ media in the functioning of your context?
44. How involved is media and leadership in your context functioning?
45. How would you describe the extent to which media and leadership are involved in your context functioning?
46. What do you make out of the term "Organizational synergy"?
47. How would you describe the interaction with other members inside your organization?
48. How would you describe the role of the media in facilitating these interactions?
49. How would you describe the role of leadership' s contribution to these interactions?
50. What are your thoughts on media and leadership as tools to improve interactions in your context?
51. How would you describe a positive interaction with other members in your context?
52. What is the role of trust in the relationships among other members of your context?
53. How would you describe the role of leadership scrutiny within your context?
54. What do you think of the media' s role in facilitating leadership scrutiny within your context?
55. How would you describe the role of transparency in your context' s leadership?
56. What do you think of the media as a tool to enhance transparency within your context?
57. How would you describe the extent to which communication is facilitated by the leadership in your context?
58. How would you describe the extent to which communication is facilitated by the media in your context?
59. What is organizational culture to you?
60. How would you describe the role of culture within your organization?
61. How would you describe the enrollment of your role in fostering this culture?
62. What is value for you?
63. What are the values that your context upholds?
64. How are you enforcing these values in your team?
65. How would you describe the involvement of the media in the creation/maintenance of these values?
66. What steps is the leadership within your organization taking to create new values?
67. How would you describe the role of media in "reflexivity" from the leadership in the organizational culture of your context?
68. How would you describe your involvement in fostering culture in your context?
69. What cultural challenges resulting from media can you observe in your context?

70. What solutions are you bringing or imagine bringing to address them?
71. What is the role of the media in these solutions?
72. How do you leverage platforms to mobilize civic participation and action?
73. What factors contribute to the success of digital campaigns led by your team in driving civic engagement?
74. How does public perception of mediatized leaders influence their ability to mobilize communities for civic causes?
75. What is the role of a diverse workforce in contributing to the overall success of your organization?
76. Have you been involved in developing or implementing policies that promote diversity? Can you share some specifics?
77. What is the media' s role within diversity enhancement in your organization?
78. How important is it for you as an organizational leader to be seen promoting diversity through media channels? Why?
79. How do you manage the public perception of your organization's commitment to diversity in a mediatized world?
80. How does your organization integrate sustainability and ethical practices into its business model to benefit society?
81. From your role, how do you foster relationships with local communities and stakeholders?
82. What is the importance of creating community engagement in your every-day tasks?
83. What role does the media play in facilitating this engagement?
84. How does your organization collaborate with other entities (NGOs, governments, other businesses) to achieve societal goals?

<div align="center">**Consent Form (Sample)**</div>

For Questions About The Study, Contact:
Nico Cruz García; 561288nc@eur.nl

Description

You are invited to participate in research about achieving Positive Impact through the employment Media and Leadership practices. The purpose of the study is to understand ***How is mediatized leadership employed by businesses and social collectives employed to enhance Positive Impact?***

Your acceptance to participate in this study means that you accept to participate in this interview. In general terms:

Your participation in the following interview will be related to make an assessment on the manners media and leadership serve the purpose of fostering positive impact in organizations

- Your participation in the following interview will be related to making an assessment on the ways media and leadership serve the purpose of enhancing positive impact in society.
- Your participation in the following interview will be related to indirect and direct experiences with leadership roles/movements/initiatives in the creative communications domain.
- Your participation in the following interview will be in relation to the explorations of your self-perceptions and personal understandings in front of existent concepts and events in the organizational environment.
- Your participation in the following interview will be in relation to extensively comprehending the interaction between leadership and media in the modern organizational functioning.

Unless you prefer that no recordings are made, I will make an audio recording of the interview. In case that you disagree with the recording please explicitly mention it before the interview takes place.

I will use the material from the interviews and my observation **exclusively** for academic work, such as further research, academic meetings and publications.

RISKS AND BENEFITS

A. As far as I can tell, there are no risks associated with participating in this research. I will not use your name or other identifying information (email address, social contacts, etc…) in the

study. To participants in the study will only be referred to with pseudonyms, and in terms of general characteristics such as gender.

B. I am aware of the responsibility of referring to you in the most suited manner in regards to your gender identity. For this reason, I will ask about your preferred pronouns in order to avoid any instance of discrimination.

C. You are always free not to answer any particular question, and/or stop participating at any nt. Feel free to communicate it throughout the interview.

Time involvement

Your participation in this study will take 45 minutes to one (1) hour max. You may interrupt your participation at any time. I' ll be conscious of time management while the interview takes place.

Participants' Rights
If you have decided to accept participation in this project, please understand your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. If you prefer, your identity will be made known in all written data resulting from the study. Otherwise, your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

Contacts and questions
If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, or are dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, you may contact –anonymously, if you wish the Faculty School of Culture, History and Communication (ESHCC) at Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam.

Signing the consent form
If you sign this consent form, your signature will be the only documentation of your identity. Thus, you **DO NOT NEED** to sign this form. In order to minimize risks and protect your identity, you may prefer to consent orally. Your oral consent is sufficient.
I hereby give consent to be recorded during this study:

Signature

Name:
Place and date:

Declaration Page: Use of Generative AI Tools in Thesis

Student Information
Name: Nicolas Cruz
Student ID: 561288
Course Name: Master Thesis CM5000
Supervisor Name: Sven Ove-Horst
Date: 11.07.2024

Declaration:

Acknowledgment of Generative AI Tools
I acknowledge that I am aware of the existence and functionality of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools, which are capable of producing content such as text, images, and other creative works autonomously.

GenAI use would include, but not limited to:
- Generated content (e.g., ChatGPT, Quillbot) limited strictly to content that is not assessed (e.g., thesis title).
- ~~Writing improvements, including~~ grammar and spelling corrections (e.g., Grammarly)
- Language translation (e.g., DeepL), without generative AI alterations/improvements.
- Research task assistance (e.g., finding survey scales, qualitative coding verification, debugging code)
- Using GenAI as a search engine tool to find academic articles or books (e.g.,

X I declare that I have used generative AI tools, specifically ChatGPT and OTTER.AI, in the process of creating parts or components of my thesis. The purpose of using these tools was to aid in generating content or assisting with specific aspects of thesis work.

X☐ I declare that I have NOT used any generative AI tools and that the assignment concerned is my original work.

Signature: Nicolas Cruz
Date of Signature: 11.07.2024

Extent of AI Usage

X☐ I confirm that while I utilized generative AI tools to aid in content creation, the majority of the intellectual effort, creative input, and decision-making involved in completing the thesis were undertaken by me. <u>I have enclosed the prompts/logging of the GenAI tool use in an appendix.</u>

Ethical and Academic Integrity

X☐ I understand the ethical implications and academic integrity concerns related to the use of AI tools in coursework. I assure that the AI-generated content was used responsibly, and any content derived from these tools has been appropriately cited and attributed according to the guidelines provided by the instructor and the course. I have taken necessary steps to distinguish between my original work and the AI-generated contributions. Any direct quotations, paraphrased content, or other forms of AI-generated material have been properly referenced in accordance with academic conventions.

By signing this declaration, I affirm that this declaration is accurate and truthful. I take full responsibility for the integrity of my assignment and am prepared to discuss and explain the role of generative AI tools in my creative process if required by the instructor or the Examination Board. I further affirm that I have used

generative AI tools in accordance with ethical
standards and academic integrity expectations.

Signature: [digital signature]
Date of Signature: [Date of Submission]

Appendix B

Code Tree

Main Research question: *How is Mediatized Leadership employed by (creative) roles to enhance "positive impact" within their organizational structures and in society?*		
Research subquestion no. 1: *How is Mediatized Leadership employed by creative roles to enhance "positive organizational impact"?*		
Selective	**Axial**	**Quote(s)**
Artistic entrepreneurship	Self-promotion for freelancers and artists	
	Leveraging market entry barriers for	
	Motivating initiative on members	
	Communicating passion through work	
	Reinforcing self-expression in content	
	Greater room for creativity in output	
Organizational synergy	Harmonizing team members interests	
	Better procedure guidance	
	Collectivistic team dynamics	
	Direct communication among members	
	More inclusion of member' s	

	input	
	Better visualization of strategic vision	
Cultural enrichment/ Practice reflexivity	Collectivistic team dynamics	
	Greater transparency on member's behavior	
	Facilitating control over procedures	
	Enhancing sustainable on-set practices	
	Direct communication among members	
	Direct communication with audiences	
	Improving time management	
	Better procedure guidance	
	Improved internal decision making	
Research subquestion no. 2: *How is Mediatized Leadership employed by creative roles to enhance "positive societal impact"?*		
Selective	**Axial**	**Quote(s)**
Social capital	Reaching broader audiences	
	Greater room for creativity in social media content	
	Higher knowledge on society's desires and needs	
	Improving guidance for	

	change	
	Awareness content creation	
	Breaking down complex information to audiences	
	Fostering greater understanding	
	Agenda setting	
Social innovation	Emotionally sensitizing audiences	
	Promotion of environmental sustainability	
	Enhancing student community building	
	Alternative solutions to ongoing issues	
	Low discussion on matter	

Emergent research subquestion: *What challenges are Mediatized Leaderships facing in achieving Positive Impact?*

Selective	Axial	Quote(s)
Technological challenges	Uncertainties on AI	
	Excessive reliance on media tools	
	Invasiveness of hybridity	
Cultural dilemmas	Extreme risk aversion	
	Lack of ethics in leadership	
	Price over quality	
	Oversimplification of	

	information	
	Engagement over substance	
Market problems	Excessive competition	
	Lack of funding	
	Price over quality	
	Unequal market share	
	Accesibility	
Life balance hardships	Blurred work boundaries	
	Increased working stress	
	Invasiveness of hybridity	
Misinformation and communication issues	Fake news	
	Reputational damage	
	Perpetuity of information in media	
	Lack of verification	
External environment	Polarized society	
	Intense political climate	
	Online bubbles in the audience	