

The Influence of Online Audience Response on Journalists

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Abstract : Audience feedback and data play an increasingly crucial role, particularly in the digital age. The advent of digital media and the digitalization of news have given rise to novel forms of audience feedback, markedly different from traditional channels. The engagement of online audiences challenges the conventional role of journalists, introducing a dynamic where audiences can wield both direct and indirect influence. This struggle between the audience and journalists is evident in their contributions and interactions. Media professionals are grappling with challenges such as derogatory remarks, hate speech, online harassment, audience hostility, and attacks from online audiences. The influence of online audiences extends to shaping journalists' daily routines and work practices. Consequently, this study seeks to analyze the impact of online audience feedback on journalists at a routine level within the Malaysian context. Employing a Hierarchy of Influence model as a theoretical framework, the study will utilize a quantitative approach with a snowball survey method. The study's findings aim to enhance our understanding of how online audiences influence journalists and their work practices, encompassing aspects like journalists' autonomy and integrity, editorial decision-making, performance and accountability, daily routines, work practices, as well as the psychological and emotional costs they bear. It's important to note that the study has limitations due to the use of the snowball survey method and its focus within the specific context of Malaysia, making it relatively small in scale.

Keywords : online audiences, feedback, influence, journalists, Malaysia

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