



**IAMCR
Lyon 23**



**IAMCR
OCP 23**



Media Production Analysis Working Group

Abstracts of papers presented at one or both of the 2023 conferences of the
International Association for Media and Communication Research
IAMCR Lyon23 – Lyon, France 9 to 13 July
IAMCR OCP23 – Online 26 June to 12 September

lyon2023.iamcr.org
July 2023

This abstract book includes original abstracts of papers accepted for IAMCR 2023 and included online at OCP23 and/or presented at Lyon23 in France

Version: 27/07/23

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Ethics in radio broadcasting: Multimodal representations of ethnic diversity in German youth radio imaging

Authors

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Abstract

The increasing role of the media in our globalised world, socio-economic inequities, urbanisation, and complex migration flows have significant impacts on the lives of many young people, shaping their encounters with difference and their perception of society and identity (Theunert, 2009). Despite German broadcasters' remit to promote social cohesion and to preserve democracy in Germany, the media have been frequently criticised for their negative portrayal of and insufficient coverage on ethnic diversity (Van Dijk, 2000; Geißler, 2010). Little is known, however, about the journalistic practices and associated ethical questions that underly representations of ethnic diversity in radio imaging and in online self-promotions of youth radio stations.

My paper presents a pilot study for a larger ethnographic project which examines youth radio journalists' work in relation to promoting social inclusion and sheds light on possible issues that lead to an unbalanced and negative portrayal of ethnic and linguistic diversity on youth radio. The interdisciplinary project combines approaches from media studies with critical sociolinguistics and cultural studies and thereby contributes to current debates in these fields on how to overcome issues of social divide often fuelled by the media against the background of increasing mobility and displacement of people (Van Dijk, 2000; Gabrielatos & Baker, 2008; Geißler, 2010). In the pilot study, which enables me to test and refine my research instruments for long-term ethnographic fieldwork, I investigate how journalists involved in the production of imaging elements for both on-air and online promotion working at a German youth radio station try to reach an ethnically diverse audience through their radio imaging, which is essential for a station's success in attracting their listenership. Based on observation and semi-structured interviews as well as on a multimodal critical discourse analysis of the produced self-advertisements, I will outline in my presentation how journalists face and try to overcome ethical challenges when producing station imaging content for a diverse listenership.

Key Words

diversity, radio production, ethics, ethnography, multimodality, youth radio, radio imaging

Predictors of Self-Censorship Patterns among Media Production Students in the UAE: Mohammad Bin Rashid School of Communication as a Case Study

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Abstract

While self-censorship has been tackled in a multitude of scholarly disciplines and in an array of contexts, little academic attention has been given to the interconnected perspectives in which self-censorship manifests in educational settings among students be it the vicinity of peers, faculty, or family. Moreover, location is an essential aspect in such inquiries, and more so in the case of the MENA region which has been typically prevailed with overwhelming forms of layered censorships in the name of self-reservation and reverence. Therefore, this study aims to shed light on the several behavioural communication attributes that surround the practice of self-censorship in the case of undergraduate media students of the American University in Dubai, particularly in regards to the creative and authorial decisions they make in their project (documentary and fiction). This entails monitoring the role of certain variables in inducing self-censorship amongst students, namely the willingness to self-censor (Hayes et al., 2005a), argumentativeness (Infante & Rancer, 1982), fear of negative evaluation (Leary, 1983), and social and cultural conformity (Feldman, 2003). For that end, a survey was administered to 99 students enrolled in the Communication and Information studies program at Mohammad Bin Rashid School of Communication- American University in Dubai. As the research aims to yield different findings related to self-censorship within a variety of contextual manners, each of the aforementioned variables was tested in the light of students' self-censorship in both their educational setting (amongst peers and faculty), as well as in the more intimate settings like amongst their families. This inquiry helps explore the extent to which these variables, both synonymously and independently, presumably influence how students' produced work comes about.

Multiple regression analysis findings revealed that social/cultural conformity, argumentativeness, and fear of negative evaluation were all significant predictors of self-censorship in the relationship between the participants and their classmates. Moreover, while neither argumentativeness nor social/cultural conformity significantly predicted self-censorship (for family), fear of negative evaluation did significantly predict self-censorship between students and their family members. Furthermore, when dealing with professors, findings showed that students' censorship patterns were predicted by argumentativeness and fear of negative evaluation but not by social/cultural conformity.

This article is therefore situated in the field of media production studies (e.g. Caldwell 2008), particularly as it explores the production culture in which student projects are created. In this sense, we argue that these projects can be viewed as a field of cultural production (Bourdieu, 1993), and while simultaneously acknowledging the sparse contribution of academia in highlighting the prevalence of this phenomenon within the pedagogical realm, be it on the wider global scale or particularly within the MENA region where this research emerges, the study attempts to fill the gap in existing literature, through shedding light on self-censorship in education as a whole, and particularly in contributing to enrich the sparse archive of studies that address student self-censorship in the region.

Key Words

Self-censorship; argumentativeness; conformity; fear of negative evaluation; media production studies

A New Era of Creative Freedoms: An Ethnographic Study of Chinese SVOD Production Cultures

Authors

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Abstract

Drawing upon two Tencent originals *13 Invites* (2016–) and *In Conversations with Strangers* (2017–), this paper explores the changes and continuities in Chinese production cultures from broadcast legacies to streaming services. By examining the production cultures at Chinese SVOD commissions, the author will demonstrate how Tencent Video provides an alternative space for “authentic” factual television that pushes the boundaries of creative and critical expression in Chinese society, echoing what John Ellis (2012) describes as television’s constant quest for a “more honest, more truthful” style. The paper focuses specifically on talk shows — a genre that historically serves as an ideological propaganda tool in the Chinese broadcasting system through the confluence of state ideology and long-established broadcast cultures, where personal expressions and critical views must give way to mainstream socialist values and collective nationalism. Chinese producers have instead managed to exert their creative freedoms in the Chinese digital streaming sector at a socio-political conjuncture currently marked by contradictory forces of market freedom and political interference. Drawing upon ethnographic research into programming strategies and production practices at Tencent Video, the paper argues that Tencent original commissions intervene in and shift the production ecology in China, offering a public space for personal voices, stories, and critical expression in the one-party state.

Key Words

Chinese media, production studies, media censorship, streaming services, creative freedoms.

Parking Humanity at the Door? Journalists and Editors Perspectives on Covering Murder-Suicide in Ireland

Authors

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Abstract

This study examines how the production of news making is evidenced in published content about the complex social phenomenon of murder-suicide. Building on Reese and Shoemaker's hierarchical model (2016), this study aims to understand the impact of the individual, routines, ideological, organisational and social institution levels on news content surrounding a case of murder-suicide in the Republic of Ireland. Data was gathered from in-depth interviews with journalists and news editors who detailed the nexus of competing interests that influence their work processes. Findings reveal how organisational structures, coupled with ideological orientations, industrial routines and the professional ideology of objectivity, acted as crucial gatekeepers, encouraging a dependency on elite sources. A crime narrative supported through the operationalisation of a media template perpetuated a hierarchy of victims. These representations served to mirror the institutionalised patriarchal power.

Key Words

- Murder-suicide
- journalists
- editors
- Ireland
- Interviews
- news media production

Understanding new technology adoption in convergent media organizations in China from individual and organizational perspectives: An extension of technology acceptance model

Authors

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Abstract

The media convergence reform in China has transformed traditional media organizations into multimedia institutions, and practitioners' working platforms have thus been differentiated. New media technology adoption of different media practitioners is key to the media convergence as media convergence is propelled and enabled by new technologies. Few studies on media convergence in China have employed quantitative research methods to examine the underlying mechanism behind the new technology adoption of different media practitioners from both individual and organizational perspectives. To fill this gap, on the basis of Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), this work examines how different working platforms of practitioners (i.e., traditional media practitioners, new media practitioners, and cross-media practitioners) influence their usage behaviors of new media technologies by testing the mediating roles of technology perceptions (i.e., perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU)) and moderating roles of organizational factors (i.e., knowledge sharing and task conflicts). An online survey was conducted with 1623 media practitioners in 64 convergent media organizations in China. The results suggested that traditional media practitioners had lower levels of PU and PEOU of new media technologies, and used new media technologies less frequently in media production, compared to new media practitioners and cross-media practitioners. PU and PEOU were found to be positively associated with usage behaviors of new media technologies and mediate the relationships between different media practitioners and usage behaviors of new media technologies. In addition, knowledge sharing among colleagues positively moderated the relationship between PU and usage behaviors of new media technologies. On the contrary, task conflicts among colleagues negatively moderated the relationship between PU and usage behaviors of new media technologies. However, the relationships between PEOU and usage behaviors of new media technologies were not moderated by knowledge sharing and task conflicts. This study offers theoretical significance for scholarship on TAM and media convergence. Meanwhile, the findings also have practical implications by providing suggestions for decision-makers and practitioners in convergent media organizations on how to improve new media technology adoption from both individual and organizational perspectives.

Key Words

media convergence, media practitioner, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use

Live streaming: An ethnographic study on the practice of folk streamers

Authors

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Abstract

[Background] According to the "China Internet Performance (Live Streaming) Industry Development Report 2021", as of December 2021, there were nearly 140 million live accounts for streaming in China. With the rise of the trend of "all people with goods", a large number of folk streamers have emerged on the platform. Many studies have shown that the work of streamers is much more than simple "small talk". Streamers need to iterate their performance and strategy through the algorithmic imagination of the affordance of live streaming platforms. Live streaming and daily replay as the core part of the imagination thus occurs, and in the symbiosis of the streamers and platform technology to change the whole live ecological competition and rules. However, most of the current studies discuss the practices outside as an onlooker, lacking the insider voices of the streamers themselves.

[Methodology] This study focuses on the life history of streamer development, through a six-month participatory observation, ethnography, and in-depth interviews from the first-person perspective of streamers, to understand and describe the technical adaptation and psychological adjustment process of folk streamers growing from ordinary individuals to "professional" streamers. This study aims to decipher the interaction and communication in the live streaming chat rooms in two dimensions: the stage change of the streamer's life history, and the cross-section of a single live streaming.

[Discussion and Conclusion] By exploring the life history changes and technological adaptation process of streamers, this study introduces the perspective of "affordance" into the front-line practice of the live streaming industry and enriches the study of affordance, which has great theoretical significance. The study also has outstanding practical contribution to promoting healthy development of live streaming industry, and provides strategies for future individual and organizational live streaming practices based on the findings.

Key Words

live streaming, folk streamers, affordance, ethnography

Automation's role in fact-checking

Authors

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Abstract

With the development of digital media and new tools for consuming information, the circulation of news has reached an unprecedented scale and amplification (Torre, 2022). The same is true of fake news. Simultaneously and driven by this phenomenon, a new professional profile appears in the field of journalism – the fact-checkers (López-Marcos & Vicente-Fernández, 2021). Fact-checking, or fact-checking *a posteriori*, has evolved as a global mobilisation of groups that seek to “investigate the qualities and contours of the creation, circulation and consumption of information” (Ekstrom et al., 2019, p.206). With this growing work to fight disinformation, several technologies associated with the practice of fact-checking have emerged, many of which are essential resources for fact-checkers, who cannot perform their job satisfactorily without them (Westlund et al. al., 2022). Other players in the information ecosystem, such as Meta, TikTok and Twitter, have invested in partnerships with fact-checking agencies, providing technological tools that help detect and verify viral and possibly false content. These technologies have the potential to help in the three stages of the checking process: the identification, the verification itself, and the distribution of checked content (Graves, 2018), performing repetitive tasks that take up a lot of time for journalists (Cardoso et al, 2021). Studies on technologies to support the fight against disinformation are more developed in Computer Science (Guo et al., 2022; Zeng et al., 2021), and studies that map the uses of automation in the work of fact-checkers are still incipient in the fields of communication and journalism studies (Westlund et al., 2022). Thus, this proposal is intended as a start towards mapping the uses of automation and artificial intelligence by fact-checkers in Portugal and Spain. For this purpose, four agencies specialised in fact-checking were chosen: Polígrafo (Portugal) and Verificat, Newtral and Maldita.es (Spain), all signatories of the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN). The methodology chosen was the semi-structured interview with representatives of these agencies. The results of the interviews point to the use of automation tools in various tasks: monitoring and filtering internet content, also carried out using algorithmic mediation thanks to partnerships with the Third-party fact-checking program (Polígrafo); in the monitoring and transcription of verifiable phrases in traditional media and of audios and videos that circulate on the internet; in the verification of images and videos; and in the selection of content submitted by the audience. All the interviewees stressed the need for automation in monitoring content on social networks, given their volume. They also agree that the greatest advantage of using these tools is to make the work more effective, more extensive, and

faster, which is particularly relevant when it comes to verifying information online. Although some of these agencies use tools developed by third parties, others develop their own software to suit specific needs. Maldita.es also provides verification tools to its readers, to directly contribute to media and digital literacy.

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Key Words

automation, fact-checking, journalistic practices, disinformation, artificial intelligence

“Window to the World”, “Amplifier of Voices”, and “Your Eyes and Ears on the Ground”: Insights into News Agency Foreign Correspondents’ Role in Communicating Foreign Cultures

Authors

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Abstract

We live in an interconnected world that has transformed into a ‘single place’ (Robertson, 1992: 6). Despite this global interconnectedness, news agencies, particularly their foreign correspondents, play a crucial role in communicating world affairs. As the ‘first important cultural framers of events’ (Papathanassopoulos and Giannouli, 2015: 4) and ‘key players in today’s globalisation of consciousness’ (Hannerz, 2002: 65), they bridge physical distances and provide us with representations of distant places, people, and events we would not be able to see and experience ourselves.

Foreign correspondents, for a long time, had been the ‘principal sources of information from far-flung lands’ (Sambrook, 2010: 8). This might be why, in the public discourse, the one-dimensional and romanticised understanding (Hamilton, 2009: 5) of the heroic and intrepid correspondent is prevalent (Murrell, 2010: 127; Brooten and Verbruggen, 2017: 444). They are seen as ‘a cosmopolitan among cosmopolitans’ (Hamilton, 2009: 5) who are experiencing ‘danger, hardship and adventure’ (Brooten and Verbruggen, 2017: 444): Are they, or are they not? – This paper intends to explore how foreign correspondents see themselves, both in terms of their cultural identity and professional role.

Heretofore, there has developed an extensive research tradition into role perceptions of journalists (see, for instance, Janowitz, 1975; Johnstone et al., 1976; Weaver, 1997), especially those working in current affairs and politics (see, for instance, Donsbach and Patterson, 2004). A contemporary and simultaneously global project is the *Worlds of Journalism Study (WJS)*, which amongst others, explored journalistic role perceptions drawing on a survey of 27,500 journalists in 67 countries. While these studies generally centred on journalists, merely a small set of studies, for instance, one by Willnat and Weaver (2003), explicitly investigated foreign correspondents’ role perception. In Willnat and Weaver’s work, most correspondents sought to offer their readers ‘analysis and interpretation of complex problems’ and support them in developing ‘intellectual and cultural interests’ (Willnat and Weaver, 2003: 415).

In studies on foreign correspondents’ role perception, there seems to be no explicit reference to those working for news agencies. On that account, this proposed paper inserts into this lacuna by focusing on European news agency foreign correspondents. It explores their role perception and, in addition, focuses on their cultural identity by asking the question, ‘Who are you?’ attempting to discover potential contradictions and conflicts that may arise between their cultural identities and perceived professional roles.

The research behind this paper stems from the PhD project *Mediating – Negotiating – Translating: News Agency Foreign Correspondents' Role in Communicating Culture*, drawing on in-depth interviews with foreign correspondents from European news agencies. It tries to gain a more nuanced understanding of how these notions translate into/shape global transcultural news production processes and, hereinafter, news agencies' representations of foreign cultures.

Key Words

Foreign Correspondents, (European) News Agencies, Role Perception, Cultural Identity

Collaborative journalism in IberoAmerica: challenges and opportunities for local media

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Abstract

Collaborative journalism is an ongoing trend in journalism as a consequence of unmanageable massive data leaks and the need to put together efforts and resources to face the new market challenges. The crisis of the traditional business model has affected local media in a particular way. The loss of advertisers, the lack of interest in the news and the proliferation of content producers has resulted in closures and layoffs; eventually, given way to the “news dessert” phenomena (Quintanilha, 2018; Mathews, 2020; DNR, 2022). Within this context, this contribution aims to shed light on the responses to the crisis by local newsrooms, with a focus on collaborative strategies.

Broadly speaking collaborative journalism entails collaborations between the media (DeRienzo, 2020; Napoli et al., 2019) and between the media and their respective audiences, known as participatory journalism (Heikka & Carayannis, 2019; Domingo, 2011). In both cases, newspapers as an entity, journalists and citizens connect and bound together in formal and informal information networks that may increase either loyalty or quality. Collaboration among the sector contributes to reinforce journalistic structures: conjoint production of content in cooperative projects has a positive financial impact by reducing the costs of the enterprise and maximizing its reach (Heinrich, 2011). Also, participatory journalism has proved essential to engage the readers in the past decades and is key to the digital strategy (Journalism that Stands Apart, 2017). There are multiple examples of cooperation between newspapers and journalists throughout history despite the competitive nature of the business, but the cooperative paradigm is gaining ground in the 21 century driven by the ICT and Web 2.0 revolutions and common threats such as disinformation (Graves & Konieczna, 2015; Wardle et al, 2019).

In this paper, we seek to better understand three dimensions of collaboration: knowledge, attitude and experience in five Ibero-American local newsrooms. The knowledge, attitude and experience within the five newsrooms will be explored through a questionnaire. Also, 20 interviews will be carried out to identify specific opportunities and challenges perceived by journalists and editors. The sample was composed by five well-established second-tier city daily newspapers, with traditional and online editions in Brazil, Spain, Mexico, Peru and Portugal. Our hypothesis number

1 is that audience collaboration is more widespread than media collaboration. Also (h2) that despite the logical competition for the market, there is a certain openness to collaboration within the sector due to the perceived crisis (Alfter, 2019).

Key Words

collaborative journalism, local journalism, network journalism

Researcher, feminist, activist: challenges and opportunities of collaborative media production research

Authors

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Abstract

Access to film- and television professionals for research has been an issue ever since Hortense Powdermaker ventured into Hollywood in the 1940s, even if she initially seemed to have downplayed the problem (Ortner 2010). Both anthropologists and media production researchers have encountered challenges in getting interviews and being allowed observations of powerful media industries professionals (see, for instance, Mayer 2008, Ortner 2010), inspiring Ortner to focus on another part of the industry. In this paper, I will discuss my research on gender issues in the Dutch film and television sector, and specifically my collaboration with professionals from the sector. I will position my research at the intersection of media production studies, feminist media studies, and activist research. Not surprisingly, such a position comes with both challenges and opportunities, which I will reflect on.

In late 2021 I was approached by the foundation Vrouwen in Beeld (Women in Pictures) to investigate the gender bias in the Dutch film and television sector. The motivation of this research was clearly activist: to provide a quantitative foundation for the anecdotal evidence that women are underrepresented in Dutch film and television, both behind and on the screen. Following the resulting report (Sanders 2022), we are now collaborating with several professional associations, including the one for actors (ACT) and the Dutch Academy for Film (DAFF), to further investigate some of the inequalities and how they might be solved. This places my research in what Lee and Zoellner (2019) categorize as media production studies concerned with moral normativity.

Vrouwen in Beeld states as its goal to improve the working conditions for women in the sector and increase their visibility. I fully and openly support this goal and therefore also consider myself an activist. In his reflection on his position as activist and scholar, Couture (2017) sketches some of the tensions inherent in this combination: although both distinct fields can learn from each other, they also come with different demands and reward systems as well as different languages and activities. In addition, there are questions of ethics for the researcher, such as how to balance involvement and critical distance (see also Lee and Zoellner, 2019).

For the current research my contact functions as a mediator and gateway to industry professionals. Through various presentations and meetings, we elicited research questions from the sector. A number of industry professionals now function as access points for their professional associations' members, opening the doors to their colleagues for us to involve them in our investigations. This forms a double layer of mediation, which in itself has upsides and downsides.

We collaboratively design the research, based on professionals' questions, needs and insights, and my curiosity and academic skills. I consider myself as 'studying with', much in the way feminist

scholars propose (see, e.g., Harvey 2020), rather than 'studying up' (Mayer 2008) or even 'sideways' (Ortner 2010).

Based on project notes, email correspondences, and my personal diary, in this paper I will further flesh out my position at the intersection researcher-feminist-activist, discuss the challenges and opportunities it provides and how I dealt with them.

Key Words

collaborative research; feminist media studies; research activism; production studies methods

Inhabiting somewhere: The rise and diffusion of diversity discourse in film industries

Authors

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Abstract

In film industries of more predominantly in multi-ethnic societies like the US, UK, Australia, Canada and New Zealand, diversity discourse is related to emerging and ongoing processes and initiatives set out in the last decade to address and respond to the rise and increase of ethnic heterogeneity and diversity on and off the screen. More recently, the concept of 'diversity' in film industries has expanded to include all underrepresented groups such as people with disability, LGBTQIA+ communities, and ageing groups. Combining the concepts of settler colonialism and habitus as a theoretical lens, I address this question: what is the content of the diversity discourses in the film industries? Drawing on interviews, industry reports and secondary literature and using the NZ film industry as the main case study, I provide an in-depth analysis of the different types of interventions that have been developed over the last few decades to increase diversity in both the NZ workforce and onscreen content. In this paper, I also reflect on my observation and experience in the NZ film industry in my current appointment in the 'Diversity and Inclusion Industry Leadership Group' working with the New Zealand Film Commission for the development of the country's first 'Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Framework' policy document. This paper contributes to the discursive evolution of diversity and what it may mean for film production locally and globally.

Key Words

screen industry, film production, difference, discourse, practice, film, film policy,

Current Challenges on a Micro Scale – The Swiss Local Media under Digital Transformation

Authors

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Abstract

Digitalization has shaped the media landscape fundamentally in recent years: It has weakened existing business models and changed content production processes. At the same time, however, it enabled new formats, new revenues models etc.

Whilst this transformation process is highly challenging for all legacy media, it is even more precarious for local media since "[...] most [local news organizations] have fewer opportunities to pursue scale and more limited resources to invest in digital media" (Jenkins & Nielsen 2018: 5). This is particularly problematic in countries with a small market and a decentralized political system, such as Switzerland, where citizens make political decisions even at the municipal level and therefore need to be fully informed about local issues to make informed decisions (Park, Fisher & Lee 2021: 1-2).

Hence, the question of how local media can sustain or reinvent themselves in times of transformation is central. What types of organizations are prevailing and which innovations are promising in this area?

These research questions are analyzed for the case of Switzerland by conducting an interdisciplinary research project. The analysis is based on a mixed-method approach. First, the researchers established a data set of all existing local media (print, online, TV and radio) in Switzerland (N=489) to gain information about the overall structure of the local media landscape.

Second, an online survey of all these local media was conducted, involving questions allowing to get a deeper understanding of their editorial objectives, business models, distribution channels, challenges and planned innovations.

Third, based on the survey responses and expert input, 12 best practice cases of local media were identified. On the one hand, these cases had to be perceived as innovative by the responders. On the other hand, the cases had to differ between prevailing distribution channels (e.g., online, tv, radio) and areas specific to Switzerland (language region, metropolitan vs. rural areas). Forth, these best practice cases were analyzed in more detail with an on-site observation in the editorial offices and with semi-structured interviews (van Selm & Helberger 2019). According to the structure-conduct-performance-model it is to be expected that (organizational) structure, including

work processes, and particularly the performance for local polity and policy of local media differs from those of legacy media (Mierzejewska 2018).

The initial results show a decrease in the number of local newspapers in Switzerland of -23% between 2011 and 2022 and are comparable to the results relating to the US (Abernathy 2020: 21-27). Furthermore, the results show that local media are increasingly turning away from print and tend to converge radio or TV to online outlets. This trend leads to a higher importance of visualizations, an increase and a diversification of online-distribution. Whilst these changes indicate innovation on the level of content, Swiss local media are facing challenges concerning funding.

In this paper, the central current challenges for local media in small markets are highlighted, and initial approaches to solutions on the part of the providers are discussed. Based on these examples, strategies for action for similar providers will be derived.

Key Words

local communication, Switzerland, media, digital transformation, interview, observation, interdisciplinary, international

Why digital competence is becoming more important in the processing phase of media production

Authors

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Abstract

The rapid spread of disinformation and manipulated information through digital technologies has become a major challenge for democracy and public discourse (Kalsnes, 2018). In order to address these challenges in media organizations, different kinds of digital competences such as fact checking, image verification, source criticism and digital literacy are employed in the news media production (Steensen et al., 2022; Lewis, 2021).

Digital competence has been defined “as involving the confident and critical use of Information Society Technology for work, leisure and communication” (Punie & Cabrera, 2006), and it refers to the use of digital tools to retrieve, assess, store, produce, present and exchange information, and to communicate and participate in collaborative networks via the Internet. Previous research has identified digital competence as a priority, particularly in larger media organizations (Krumsvik, 2015), but less is known about how the recent spread of deep fakes, AI generated images and text, and fake social media accounts have impacted priorities within the news production process. This study aims to address this research gap.

The paper is based on biennial surveys from 2013 to 2022, where newspaper executives (Editor-in-Chief, Managing Director, and Publisher) in Norwegian newspapers were asked whether digital competences were most important to (1) *find*, (2) *process/analyze*, or (3) *present* the news if they were to recruit new employees to the newsroom.

Key findings from this longitudinal study indicate:

- Digital competence for *processing/analyzing* is becoming more important, *presenting* less important.
- Digital competence for *processing/analyzing* doubled in importance from 2015 to 2022.

The paper will also analyze the effects of media ownership in relation to digital competences. Previous research found that editors and managers in newspapers owned by media groups rated most digital competences significantly higher than executives from other newspapers, and ownership explained the relative importance of digital competences necessary in process innovation (Krumsvik, 2015). A conflict between the product innovation of online news features and the process innovation of efficient multi-platform news production was also identified. The focus of innovation in newspapers owned by media groups tended to be on efficient multi-platform news production rather than the unique features of digital journalism on each publication platform. A low priority afforded to computer-assisted journalism skills in processing/analyzing of

news was expected to have consequences for the priority of the development of advanced digital methods in investigative journalism.

The paper will investigate whether the increased priority of digital competence for *processing/analyzing* rather than *finding and presenting* news can be explained by a stronger focus on investigative journalism or if there are other concerns with the quality of news introduced to the equation in recent years, e.g., the issues relating to fake news and digital misinformation.

Key Words

Digital competences, Fake news, Media production, Media innovation, Media ownership.

A Grounded Exploratory Study of DAO: Transforming Decentralized Media Content Production in the Web 3.0 Era

Authors

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Abstract

After "read-only" Web 1.0 and "readable + writable" Web 2.0, Web 3.0 surpasses the concept of the intelligent network first proposed by Jeffrey Zeldman in 2006, expanding the new characteristics of "ownable" with the decentralized vision of Blockchain (Nath, 2014; Alabdulwahhab, 2018). Decentralized Autonomous Organizations (DAOs) based on blockchain and smart contract technology are being experimentally bred as an innovative human organizational paradigm that has the potential to transcend corporatism (Carlos, 2021). DAO deploys automatically executing smart contracts on a public blockchain, enabling people to coordinate and govern themselves in a decentralized system independent of central control, while the blockchain and its derived token economy model can ensure the participants' ownership of data output and economic benefits through transparent and open distributed operations with underlying data-rights confirmation. (Youssef, 2020; Yao, 2022).

In terms of media content production, DAO decentralizes content production with flatter co-production and co-governance, empowers and confirms the production of global content producers, and leads open cooperative participation. So, in the Web 3.0 era, how does DAO transform the content production process through blockchain, smart contract technology tools, and decentralized organizational forms? How to ensure 'ownability' for content producers? What are the characteristics of changes in media content production? This study will provide answers through grounded research on two major media DAO pioneer organizations, PubDAO and DAOrayaki. These two DAOs established in 2022, have more than 1,800 and 700 open members distributed worldwide as of January 2023. The content produced by the two DAOs mainly focuses on blockchain technology popularization and comprehensive research. They are exploring the division of labor for the production and distribution of content, organizing the individuals who produce content openly but decentralizing it and ensuring that the authors are paid, and co-opting and co-constructing the content production community without the need for editorial rights.

Up to now, the existing research only focuses on failed news platforms based on blockchain like Civil and DNN. Most of the research on DAO stays on organizational management and overview outlook, with little focus on content production changes. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct research on media DAOs as an innovative organizational model of production. In consideration of the innovative and exploratory nature of the research, this study will choose to use ground theory, which integrates quantitative analysis into qualitative research, conducts diachronic research on

cumbersome and meticulous phenomena, discovers dynamic processes, change rules and interactions, and constructs theories on specific empirical data. (Glaser&Strauss,1968)

The procedural ground theory has clear and operable process specification, which includes optional coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Optional coding is divided into three steps: labeling, initial conceptualization, and core conceptualization, and classifies different concepts into negative categories. The axial coding sorts out all the subcategories extracted from the open coding, establishes logical connections according to the mutual relationship, and repeatedly classifies the operation to finally obtain the main category. By analyzing the relationship between different main categories, selective coding extracts the core category that can highly summarize some of the main categories with related relationships, verifies and improves the category relationship, and finally establishes a complete model of Web 3.0 media content production in DAO.(Strauss&Corbin,1990)

The encoding source for this study will be drawn from existing literature, observation notes from participant observation, and interview notes from semi-structured interviews with 20 interviewees from purposive sampling combined with snowball sampling, including the co-founder, sponsor, member of PubDAO and DAOrayaki, Web3 media practitioners and investors. The research seeks to explore the transformations in media content production in the Web 3.0 era.

Key Words

Web3.0; DAO(Decentralized Autonomous Organization); Media Content Production; Grounded Study

Creative aid or artificial prop? A technographic analysis of the use of artificial intelligence tools in film production

Authors

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Abstract

This paper focuses on how tools powered by artificial intelligence (AI) are being used in the film industry and how a growing shift towards algorithmically assisted filmmaking may impact creative, economic, technical, and aesthetic aspects of film production. In recent years, various AI companies have been providing tools and services to the screen industry that claim to ‘increase efficiency’, ‘reduce risk’, and ‘boost creativity’ at various stages of the production process. Such AI tools range from business-oriented platforms such as Cinelytic and Largo.ai (financial risk analysis, predictive insights, and content analysis to help with greenlighting, casting, and distribution decisions) to creative-oriented, generative tools such as Publikum, Dramatron, DeepStory, and Midjourney. We examine how film practitioners such as producers, writers, and editors interact with these AI-powered tools in their workflow, whether — and how — they perceive such tools as creative aids, what (creative) knowledge is being used in this process, and whether the intensified use of these technologies marks a qualitative shift in discourses of creative labour in cultural production. We argue that the relation between imaginaries and technology in our case studies is one of co-determination. This allows for a nuanced analysis of the relationship between machines, creativity, and authorship and its impact on the economic, technological and aesthetic aspect of the film industry.

Methodologically, this study combines two approaches aimed at bringing science and technology studies (STS) into conversation with media production studies via a relational-materialist lens. First, we conduct a ‘technography’ — ethnography of technology-in-use (Kien 2008; Bucher 2018) — including participant observation and qualitative semi-structured interviews with film practitioners using AI tools at different stages of the production process, from screenwriting to editing to marketing and distribution. The aim of this first approach is to examine the effects that these novel technologies have on economic, creative, and aesthetics decisions via our informants’ interactions with the tools. At the same time, the technographic method assumes that a given technology may have different effects depending on the ways in which it is perceived and deployed. This allows us to examine the relational dynamics between technologies, social formations, and individual practices.

Second, we conduct a critical discourse analysis of the promises behind these tools, focusing on the self-articulation (Caldwell 2008), media ecology (Fuller 2007), and ‘semiotic systems’ (Mackenzie 2014) clustered around the tech companies producing these tools (e.g. corporate websites, press releases, advertisements, recorded documents from film festivals and industry

meetings, blog posts, etc.). The main aim of this second methodological approach is to trace the sociotechnical imaginaries surrounding these technologies. We explore how different actors in the media industry perceive and articulate the promises and dangers of these tools. Are these tools being perceived as truly creative and hence as a threat to the creative labour of human actors? Or is artificial intelligence being perceived as a tool that can enhance human creative practices? And how do these different perceptions of the relation between human and machine creativity determine the design and application of these technologies?

Key Words

film, creativity, automation, sociotechnical imaginaries, labour, technography, artificial intelligence

Reformulating the production processes of media companies through cross-border cooperation: analysis of the innovation exchange program Star4Media

Authors

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Abstract

Strategic justification. Digital transformation is not merely a technological issue, but has become a strategic aspect for all types of companies, including those operating in the information industry. Disruptive change affecting information industry entails not only a loss of influence over society but also implies the proliferation of all kind of doubtful veracity contents that contribute to undermine the solidity of democratic institutions on an international scale.

It is essential a better understanding of the singularities that collaborative investigative journalism adopts in such environment as a formula to increase efficiency in the flow of cross-border news content and the quality of journalism and as an initiative that transcends the concrete fact of the mere informative action and enters into the strengthening of democracy betting on the generation of deep changes in the methods of working and in the very structure of the system that must occur in the mid and long term.

From different international organizations, including UNESCO, the importance of an independent media industry is warned to guarantee values like freedom of expression or citizens' free access to information, underlining the need to establish mechanisms that facilitate the financing of innovative

Hypothesis. From an institutional point of view, the European Union is at the forefront in the promotion of all kinds of policies that encourage cross-border collaboration between journalistic organizations, including a specific aspect such as innovation applied to newsroom transformation and business transformation formulas. As a result, various initiatives are being generated in the different EU countries that are largely unknown both to the public and to the scientific literature.

Methodology. In order to prove or refute our hypothesis we have decided to examine Star4Media, an innovation exchange programme aiming at facilitating cooperation between media professionals, to accelerate media innovation and cross-border cooperation.

Star4Media is inside Journalism Partnerships, a global initiative promoted by the European Union aiming to help the wider European news media sector become more sustainable and resilient, thus contributing to trustworthy reporting on current affairs, to an informed and inclusive democratic debate, to skills development and employment for news media professionals and journalists.

We have analyzed its first two editions of the programme and studied 21 cross-border initiatives, involving 42 media organisations and 105 media professionals from all over Europe. In all the cases we consider these main aspects: media and countries involved, objectives and production models. We consider that the systematic analysis of these aspects allows us to deduce the main keys that explain the contribution of cross-border cooperation to reformulate the production processes of media companies.

Key Words

cross-border cooperation, collaborative journalism, European Union, Star4Media, digital transformation

Exploring the Impact of Leadership on Innovation through In-Depth Interviews in Multiple Chinese Media Organizations: A Case Study Analysis

Authors

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Abstract

Innovation is a crucial driving force for the growth and development of media organizations (Sylvie et al. 183-206; Wagemans et al. 209-224). It has been widely acknowledged that leadership plays a vital role in facilitating innovation (Chesbrough 33; Hang et al. 87-99). However, there is still insufficient empirical research exploring the mechanism by which organizational leadership affects innovation, especially in real-world media management scenarios. In particular, Chinese media organizations, which are predominantly state-owned and have hierarchical and rigid structures, are often viewed as resistant to change and innovation (Hang 88; Zhu 168). Thus, it is crucial to study the role of leadership in motivating and driving innovation in the Chinese media sector.

The current study, utilizing the transformational leadership theory within the structure-agent approach framework (Giddens 376; Burns et al.; Pless et al.; Voegtlin et al. 1-16), investigates the interaction between management leadership and structural factors in media innovation by conducting in-depth interviews with 24 leaders from Chinese media organizations. Our findings reveal that leaders are motivated to drive innovation through higher-level assessment criteria and pressure from competition, but their actions are also impacted by structural factors both inside and outside the organization. As such, leaders must cultivate an innovation culture within the organization, and strategically coordinate their role with supportive resources and address restrictive barriers in the innovation environment. The strategies involve identifying innovation opportunities, allocating resources, leading innovation teams, and proactively mitigating structural restrictions.

This study examines the impact of transformational leadership on media innovation. Using a localized definition, we have summarized the four key elements of transformational leadership that influence innovation by addressing organizational and external factors. These elements are: 1) the charisma of leaders, such as their decisiveness in seizing innovation opportunities, their courage to push boundaries, and their competence in securing resources for innovation; 2) the virtue of leaders, for example, their sense of morality in ensuring the social responsibility of innovations; 3) the vision-driven motivation of leaders, which helps set the vision for innovation and creates a motivating environment; and 4) personal attention to employees, which fosters a cooperative relationship and trust between leaders and employees for innovation. Additionally, since transformational leadership does not exclude the transactional approach (Bass and Avolio

112), this study also highlights how transactional leadership can complement the process of media innovation through task design, system control, and reward allocation.

By combining the leadership theory with specific context of management in innovation of Chinese media organizations, this contribution provides Chinese cases for a more generalized understanding in how the leadership may affect the innovation within a given structure and also offers practical implications for media managers.

Key Words

Media organization, innovation, leadership, transformational leadership, structure-agent

Internet meme as art industry? WeChat and the rise and fall of biaoqing in China

Authors

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Abstract

Facilitated by the all-encompassing app WeChat, pictorial meme, or *biaoqing* (meaning facial expression), has become an everyday language for online communication in China. It grew into a booming industry driven by market values since 2015 when WeChat launched the *Biaoqingbao* Market, a meme publishing platform within the app. *Biaoqing* of originally created cartoon characters has been commodified in various forms: licensed products, branded memes and illustrations, co-branded products, offline exhibitions in malls, etc. Many *biaoqing* artists, who often started as young art students making memes as an after-school hobby, gained the market's attention and became professionals with huge profits. Their roadmaps vary from independent artists and entrepreneurs of start-up studios to contractors in media companies. However, the meme industry quickly cooled down in the late 2010s, and the participants had to adjust to its shrink.

Based on twelve artists' interviews and ethnographic study in meme production companies, this research showcases the rise and fall of the industry through the eyes of professional workers. It explores how WeChat and the fast-shifting media landscape in China contributed to the growing meme culture and business. It is specifically interested in artists' various artistic strategies to take advantage of WeChat's architecture, their struggles between artistry and the market, and self-mediation and understanding. This study discovers how Internet memes grew into a localized creative industry in China with digital arts marketing strategy. *Biaoqing*, or the pictorial meme, not only became an integral tradition of media production in China but also a critical method for young illustrators or artists to participate in professional career.

Key Words

WeChat, Internet meme, digital arts marketing, creative industry, China

The Global Suppliers of Video Streaming Industry in South Korea: Examining its Market Structure and Localization Strategies

Authors

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Abstract

Since the 1980s, the process of media globalization has accelerated with breakthroughs of new technologies and deregulations, especially in the United States (Zhang, 2018). Many television companies expanded themselves throughout the world and grew into large transnational media corporations (TRMCs). However, tech giants like Netflix brought about the emerging industry of video streaming and challenged legacy TRMCs, which became a major force in media globalization. Considering this multi-sited, quasi-iterative, and rapidly evolving marketplace, legacy practices persist alongside and often in competition with new modes of production, dissemination, and consumption (Sanson & Steirer, 2019).

These digital platforms not only produced and distributed original content worldwide, but also offered subscription video on demand (SVoD) services and therefore acquired a central role in different countries' media systems. The importance of the Asian region cannot be overstated, with many streaming platforms from the United States operating and competing with local platforms. Specifically, East Asia is popular with overseas platforms due to its high Internet penetration and vibrant cultural production environment. For example, Hulu chose Japan as its first country for global expansion back in 2011 because of its fast broadband speeds, high penetration rates, and rapidly growing subscription video on demand (SVoD) market potential.

South Korea is also a country that is highly penetrated by the Internet media, gathering legacy TV companies (KBS, SBS, MBC, et al) with its Internet channel, local and global streaming platforms (tvN, Netflix, Disney+, Apple TV+, et al). Meanwhile, South Korea owns an active cultural production and transnational consumption environment. However, compared with the active industrial practice, there are few studies on the impact of media globalization on the Korean market. In such a diverse market, there remain some questions worth studying such as what kind of market structures and localized competitive strategies these global suppliers have developed, and whether they have incorporated local culture or formed new cultural hybridity. Given this, this study proposes two research questions: (1) How is the current development and market structure of the streaming media industry in South Korea? (2) What competitive strategies does global suppliers adopt for catering to local market?

Through the method from industrial organization theory (market structure, market behavior, market performance), this paper argues that as global suppliers, transnational streaming platforms have joined the Korean market because of the well-established communication technology and the dynamic cultural consumption environment, which has changed the local competition as a whole. The analysis of market structure, market behavior, and market performance shows that the Korean

streaming media industry is highly concentrated and dominated by the top platforms. The result is in line with the economy of scale in the law of media industry development. In terms of market structure, global suppliers, mainly Netflix, are significantly competitive, while local platforms have a large number but a low overall market share. In terms of market behavior, these platforms mainly adopt multiple strategies of strategic alliances and partnerships, production of original content, and global distribution to attract users. Regarding the market performance, in the case of Netflix, for example, on the one hand, the revenue scale is growing rapidly at the economic level, but on the other hand, at the social level, they may have conflicts of interest with local platforms, which may also have adverse effects on policy regulation, user welfare, and cultural diversification.

In the trend of media globalization, the cultural hybridity of streaming media platforms is prominent. In the six years after entering the Korean market, global suppliers have changed the media and content ecosystem in various ways. In particular, Netflix is pushing Korean series and movies to the global stage, attracting audiences beyond the local market through high investment in content. The research report from Deloitte summarized it into four roles: reliable partner, nurturer, pathfinder and wave maker (Deloitte, 2021). However, the positive impact of these global suppliers on local economy and society represents only one aspect. Researchers should also pay attention to more possible long-term and far-reaching negative impacts to avoid adverse consequences.

The conclusion is helpful to understand the impact of these transnational platforms in practice, but there are still shortcomings to be further studied. First, the study mainly focuses on Netflix for case analysis, and it can further discuss the market behavior of local platforms. Second, most of the data used in the study are second-hand information, and supplementing exclusive first-hand information will make the findings more accurate, such as interviews with senior executives, audience surveys, etc.

Key Words

Globalization, Streaming Media, Korean, Digital Platform, Netflix

Working three jobs – at the same time: Occupational convergence in factual TV production

Authors

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Abstract

Economic and technological developments since the early 2000s have altered traditional work practices in the television industries and created new job roles. This paper focuses on the impact of recent shifts in the division of labour and investigates the convergence of occupational roles in factual television production. In particular, it focuses on the shift towards 'self-shooting' on location, which has become a prominent, if not dominant, practice in British factual television production.

As 'self-shooters' television workers are expected to do the work of previously separate jobs – including camera operator, sound recordist, director, and producer – all by themselves and often at the same time. Although this occupational convergence makes the boundaries between production roles more porous and enables flexible career specialisation, discussions in trade publications and on online industry fora raise questions about programme quality and production standards (e.g. cinematography.com, broadcastnow.co.uk), while industry trade publications and production handbooks claim that a broader skill base covering a range of production roles has become a necessity for contemporary television workers (e.g. Ward et al 2016). In practice, self-shooting creates specific pressures and demands for television workers and has serious implications for working conditions and skill requirements.

Problematic working conditions in the British television industry have been criticised widely in academic literature and industry debate, yet, the occupational convergence of self-shooting creates particular systemic challenges concerning physical and mental health, textual quality and multiskilling, which this presentation will explore. The paper presents initial findings of an ongoing research project investigating skills and digital technology in television production in the UK. Based on qualitative interviews with British self-shooters working in unscripted factual programming, it discusses the challenges and the resulting risks and coping strategies for this particular work role. Specifically, it highlights the impact of occupational convergence and related multiskilling on individuals in terms of (1) skill and career development, (2) working conditions and personal health, and (3) creative autonomy.

Within media production and cultural industries research, most studies investigating multiskilling focus on journalism practice and the impact of multiplatform journalism on work processes and responsibilities. They highlight the ambiguous impact of convergence processes including multiskilling on journalistic practice and attitudes. This includes, on the one hand, perceptions of greater creative autonomy, upskilling and empowerment (e.g. Nygren 2014, Menke et al 2016), and, on the other, a loss of autonomy, deskilling and stress (e.g. Wallace 2013, Bro et al 2016),

especially when coupled with economic rationalisation. Compared to this dichotomy of improvement versus deterioration that is apparent in journalism scholarship, this paper argues that the impact of multiskilling for self-shooters as a result of occupational convergence is more complex. It highlights the contradictory experiences of the work role and draws attention to further influential factors that determine the nature and extent of this impact, including inter-departmental relationships, genre and professional experience.

Key Words

production studies, television, cultural labour, multiskilling, occupational convergence