

Abstract:

**The Informal Decision Making and Management in Newsrooms in Vietnam:
The Impact of Dysfunctional Norms on Journalism**

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The ongoing digitalization has created new opportunities and challenges for journalists and the production of journalism in Vietnam. This Ph.D. project examines how informal structures and corruption are disrupting the news-making in Vietnamese newsrooms. In Vietnam, journalism is affected by repressive media laws with tightened regulations of the internet, and by informal structures and corruption in the newsrooms. Previous research in other developing countries has examined empirical findings of how the presence of bribing is affecting the news reporting, and thus how the lack of media ethics in education and training programs enable corrupt practices. (Aggarwal, 1989; Akabogu, 2017)

Launched in 1986, the economic reforms, doi moi, aimed to create a 'socialist-oriented market economy' in Vietnam. Since then, the government has initiated several policies and legal reforms to improve its public administration system. (Buhmann, 2007) The societal development has generated a growing income gap between the rich and the poor, and a growing informal sector. Tromme (2016) describes a widespread corruption in the welfare system and Transparency International ranked Vietnam as 107th of 180 countries on perceptions of corruption in 2017.

This Ph.D. project examines the construction of journalists' practices in Vietnam by contextualizing the informal structures and corruption in the newsrooms. By analysing corruption based on an approach of seeing corruption as a collective action problem (Marquette and Peiffer, 2015; Schwertheim, 2017), it will use a conceptual framework based on scholarly research on multi-level order of corruption perspectives (Hooghe and Marks, 2003; Marks, 1993) in combination with previous research on corruption in journalism and the concept of brown envelope journalism to examine the empirical findings in Vietnam. (Lodamo and Skjerdal, 2009; Rao, 2018)

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