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Title - Journalism for Social Good: Sustaining Quality Journalism through Crowdfunding

Major Findings

- This study explores the concept of quality journalism through a comprehensive analysis of interviews with news professionals and media experts.
- The research identifies interconnected attributes that define quality journalism, with media independence emerging as the cornerstone. This foundational attribute enables other crucial aspects such as truthfulness, impartiality, public interest, exclusivity, and diversity to flourish in news reporting.
- The study presents a structural framework illustrating the relationships between these attributes. At its core, independence fosters truthful, impartial, public interest, and exclusive reporting while promoting diverse content and contributors. Truthful journalism is further characterized by factual, verified, investigative, and credible reporting. The framework also emphasizes the importance of readability for better audience engagement and highlights the need for significant investment in all areas to achieve quality journalism.
- This structure provides a comprehensive understanding of the complex nature of quality journalism and its essential components in the Indian context, fulfilling the study's first objective of defining quality journalism. The definition that has evolved out of talking to several people from the field of journalism is that: "Quality journalism is a process of independence, instilling courage in the hearts of journalists to unearth not one but multiple truths of an event, meticulously verify them by diverse sources, and present them to the public in a simple, understandable, and accessible manner, cultivating trust in the journalistic process. It is fearless, impartial journalism that has to overcome immense political and economic pressures that seek to deter the pursuit of truth. It is the product of

passionate, dedicated, and skilled experts hailing from diverse backgrounds and cultures, irrespective of their educational backgrounds.”

- In addressing the second, third, and fourth objectives, the research explores factors affecting journalism quality. These include political, economic, social, and organizational factors.
- Political forces are found to be particularly dominant, often hindering critical reporting. Journalists face various challenges, including violent threats, attacks, lawsuits, and harassment from politically aligned groups. The study discusses concerns about excessive government control through strict media accreditation guidelines and new IT regulations for digital news media.
- Social factors affecting quality journalism include journalists' personal biases, ethical dilemmas, mental and physical health issues, and the need for diversity and inclusion in newsrooms.
- Organizational factors such as journalist training, education, infrastructure, and technology also play crucial roles in affecting quality.
- The economic aspect of quality journalism highlights the need for sustainable funding models. Financial stability is seen as key to maintaining independence and overcoming various obstacles.
- This research examines alternative funding methods, including crowdfunding approaches like paywalls, membership fees, subscriptions, and public donations. However, the study reveals a gap between expectations and realities of crowdfunding journalism in India, identifying several factors contributing to the ineffectiveness of this model in the Indian context.