

MEDIA INDEPENDENCE ISSUES IN WARTIME

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Problem Statement. The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 led to a complete restructuring of the work of thousands of Ukrainian media outlets. Many of them are still struggling to survive while implementing new concepts of independent media in wartime. However, media independence is essential to ensure that the public is well-informed and able to hold the government accountable for its actions.

The wartime decree includes a ban on reporting the progress of active and planned battles, revealing a soldier's name or face without permission, reporting on the whereabouts and movement of equipment and troops, and propagating or justifying Russia's war. Instead of these points, the small budget for development, power outages, government censorship and control, and the lack of advertisers have caused an unpredictable outcome, which increases the possibility of maintaining power for oligarchs. Work conditions are difficult to continue media functioning, and so a mechanism of informing people is slowly disappearing as many media owners sell their concerns instead of seeking new ways to solve problems to keep their finances safe. [1]

Objectives. The research aims to achieve two main objectives. Firstly, it intends to identify practical and effective solutions for the major media independence issues that have arisen due to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. With the help of the internet, the study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the problems faced by Ukrainian media and explore potential solutions to counter them. The research will help in developing strategies to strengthen media independence and prevent the issues from increasing in the future.

Secondly, the study aims to gain a deeper understanding of the origins of the media independence issues in Ukraine. By exploring the root causes of the issues, the research will be able to identify effective ways to resist them. Understanding the history and context of media independence in Ukraine is crucial in identifying the challenges that need to be addressed. By conducting a comprehensive analysis of the media environment, the research will provide valuable insights into how media independence can be preserved in difficult circumstances. [2]

Methods. The primary challenge for Ukrainian media in wartime is to balance the need for accurate and timely reporting with the imperative to protect national security and military operations. Often, journalists have a responsibility to report on the facts, regardless of whether they are negative or positive. Many researchers concentrate on analyzing the work of Ukrainian media on a day-to-day basis to check if the media is obeying the rules of reporting in wartime.

Statistics help to fully observe the performed content, and we are able to see the things the media is focused on more while broadcasting, including profound investigations, small researches, or even advertisements. At the same time, in a country dominated by state-run news channels and TV channels owned by oligarchs, Ukraine's independent media have experienced operating under pressure while holding the powerful to account. So, compliance with safety has a really huge impact on the media.

Results. For now, Ukrainian journalists provide crucial, localized safety information and allow internally displaced people to keep track of home news. It can also provide a lifeline of connection for those living under occupation. That's why they play a crucial role in ensuring that the public is aware of the costs of war, including the loss of life and the impact on civilians.

Media independence issues in wartime are complex and often contentious. The main solution for it is to establish laws and regulations that allow for some level of media independence during wartime. However, even in countries with strong legal protections for media independence, journalists often face challenges such as harassment, intimidation, and violence.

The war forced Ukrainian media to adapt its reporting rhythm, switching to producing daily content. So, creating different crowdfunding platforms can help media to stay financially strong and to be independent from the impact of oligarchs. [3]

Conclusions. Facing the war was a big challenge for Ukrainian media. After the first year, public perception of the war has started to shift as it drags on, creating new difficulties. Fortunately, journalists have completely adapted their work and gained a lot of useful experience while reporting from the front line. The main focus changed; lives of civilians are much more important than the latest rumors about the origin of politicians' money. [4]

References:

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