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An exploration of two Swedish Media Aid projects

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Abstract:

Transforming Journalism in Vietnam: An exploration of two Swedish Media Aid projects

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Keywords: Vietnam, media aid, media ethics, journalism training, newsroom management

This paper examines the development of the journalist profession and the practice of training in media ethics in Vietnam and is based on empirical findings from two media aid project carried out by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) during 14 years, from 1993 until 2007. The core of the analysis is project documents such as course documents, evaluations, and field notes. The findings indicate that the projects provided Vietnamese journalists with multiple sets of skills, such as live broadcasting radio, newspaper design, and interviewing techniques. Hence, the projects also initiated discussions on professional norms and journalism culture regarding newsroom management and ethical conduct, which will be examined with a critical perspective on media aid developed by Jairo Lugo-Ocando (2020).

The conceptual framework is based on the notion of comparative media systems, first launched by Hallin and Mancini (2004) and later developed by Yin (2008) into a Vietnamese context. In addition, I apply notions about global media ethics based on theoretical concepts developed by Ward (2013), Rao (2010), and Couldry (2013) to examine ethical disruptions that occurred during the training courses.

Previous research on the development of journalism in Vietnam provides insights about a media industry in transition, to a large extent impacted by digital platforms. (cf. Mach and Nash, 2019; Nguyen, 2008; Vu, 2015) This paper contributes to the existing research by adding historical perspectives to the contemporary industry.

231 words

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