

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Legal Strategies for Protecting Journalists in Conflict Zones

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The section on legal frameworks broadly covers international and national laws but lacks specific examples of successful enforcement or case studies where these laws have protected journalists. Incorporating detailed case studies or a deeper analysis of specific laws could strengthen this section.

While the article mentions psychological impacts such as PTSD and stress, it would benefit from a more thorough exploration of these issues. Consider integrating quantitative data or psychological studies that detail the long-term effects on journalists' mental health.

The methodology section should be expanded to include more information about the interview questions and the rationale behind their design. Additionally, detailing the process for ensuring the validity and reliability of the interview responses would enhance the credibility of the research.

Digital threats are briefly mentioned; however, specific strategies or technologies that could mitigate these risks are not explored in depth. Adding examples of effective digital security tools or practices currently used by journalists could be beneficial.

The study mentions support networks but does not delve into how these networks operate or their success rates. Expanding on this topic with examples of networks providing effective support would provide a more comprehensive view of protective strategies.

More details about how NVivo was used in the thematic analysis could be provided. Specifically, outline the criteria for theme development and how the software's capabilities were leveraged to draw meaningful conclusions from the interview data.

The conclusion offers a brief mention of future research directions but lacks specific guidance. Adding detailed suggestions for future studies, such as exploring emerging technologies or the impact of global political changes on journalist safety, would be valuable.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The article could benefit from a more critical review of international laws like the Geneva Conventions, focusing on their limitations and the reasons behind their inconsistent application. This could involve a comparative analysis with other fields where similar laws are more effectively enforced.

The discussion on legal and political barriers would be enriched by including more geographical diversity. Presenting case studies from different regions could illustrate how local political contexts influence the effectiveness of legal protections.

Integrating quantitative data to supplement the qualitative findings could provide a broader perspective on the issues faced by journalists in conflict zones. Statistics on attacks against journalists or compliance with international law would add depth to the analysis.

While the article covers various protective strategies, it could further detail the implementation challenges these strategies face. Discussing real-world applications and the obstacles encountered could make this section more robust.

A more detailed justification for the selection of interview participants would enhance the methodology section. Explaining why these particular journalists were chosen and how they represent different aspects of conflict journalism would clarify the study's scope.

The theoretical framework could be strengthened by connecting the themes identified in the study to broader media and communication theories. This would provide a stronger academic foundation and integrate the findings into existing literature.

The ethical considerations section is quite brief. Expanding on the specific ethical dilemmas encountered during the research, such as potential biases or conflicts of interest, and how they were addressed would improve transparency and trust in the study's process.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor's decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.