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# A SCOPING REVIEW OF INDONESIAN JOURNALISM RESEARCH:

trends and insights from inception to  
2024



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**ABSTRACT** – This study maps the trends, themes, and gaps in Indonesian journalism research published in international journals indexed in Scopus and Web of Science (WoS). A scoping review method was applied, initially identifying 1.021 articles, which were narrowed down to 71 articles published up to 2024 following the PRISMA-ScR framework. The analysis reveals that Indonesian journalism research appeared in international databases only from 2000, with a significant increase since 2020. However, the research remains largely reactive and repetitive, with limited exploration of proactive themes. The majority of publications come from regional journals in Malaysia, the Asia-Pacific region, and Indonesia. More than half of the studies use qualitative methods, and 50.7% lack clear theoretical frameworks. In terms of the Body of Knowledge (BoK), the distribution of topics is as follows: core journalism (33.3%), journalism's influence

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(25.64%), journalism's context (23.08%), challenges in journalism (10.26%), and the future of journalism (7.69%). Despite this growth, Indonesian journalism research has yet to make a significant impact on global journalism studies. The study recommends focusing on the localization of Indonesian journalism, particularly in digital, local, and educational journalism, areas that remain underexplored.

**Keywords:** Body of knowledge. Indonesia. Journalism research. Scoping review.

## UMA REVISÃO DE ESCOPO DA PESQUISA NO JORNALISMO INDONÉSIO: tendências e insights do início até 2024

**RESUMO** – Este estudo mapeia as tendências, temas e lacunas na pesquisa no jornalismo indonésio publicada em periódicos internacionais indexados na Scopus e na Web of Science (WoS). Foi aplicado um método de revisão de escopo, identificando inicialmente 1.021 artigos, os quais foram reduzidos a 71 artigos publicados até 2024, seguindo o referencial PRISMA-ScR. A análise revela que a pesquisa em jornalismo indonésio apareceu em bases de dados internacionais somente a partir de 2000, com aumento significativo desde 2020. No entanto, a pesquisa permanece amplamente reativa e repetitiva, com exploração limitada de temas proativos. A maioria das publicações provém de periódicos regionais da Malásia, da região Ásia-Pacífico e da Indonésia. Mais da metade dos estudos utiliza métodos qualitativos, e 50.7% carecem de referenciais teóricos claros. Em termos do corpo de conhecimento (Body of Knowledge, BoK), a distribuição dos tópicos é a seguinte: jornalismo essencial (33.3%), influência do jornalismo (25.64%), contexto do jornalismo (23.08%), desafios do jornalismo (10.26%) e futuro do jornalismo (7.69%). Apesar desse crescimento, a pesquisa em jornalismo indonésio ainda não alcançou um impacto significativo nos estudos globais de jornalismo. O estudo recomenda focar na localização do jornalismo indonésio, particularmente no jornalismo digital, local e educacional, áreas que permanecem pouco exploradas.

**Palavras-chave:** Corpo de conhecimento. Indonésia. Pesquisa em jornalismo. Revisão de escopo.

## UNA REVISIÓN DE ALCANCE DE LA INVESTIGACIÓN PERIODÍSTICA INDONESIA: tendencias y hallazgos desde sus inicios hasta 2024

**RESUMEN** – Este estudio mapea las tendencias, temas y vacíos en la investigación periodística indonesia publicada en revistas internacionales indexadas en Scopus y Web of Science (WoS). Se aplicó un método de revisión de alcance, identificando inicialmente 1.021 artículos, que se redujeron a 71 artículos publicados hasta 2024 siguiendo el marco PRISMA-ScR. El análisis revela que la investigación periodística indonesia apareció en bases de datos internacionales solo a partir del año 2000, con un aumento significativo desde 2020. Sin embargo, la investigación sigue siendo en gran medida reactiva y repetitiva, con una exploración limitada de temas proactivos. La mayoría de las publicaciones provienen de revistas regionales de Malasia, la región Asia-Pacífico e Indonesia. Más de la mitad de los estudios utilizan métodos cualitativos, y el 50.7% carece de marcos teóricos claros. En términos del cuerpo de conocimiento (Body of Knowledge, BoK), la distribución de temas es la siguiente: periodismo fundamental (33.3%), influencia del periodismo (25.64%), contexto del periodismo (23.08%), desafíos del periodismo (10.26%) y futuro del periodismo (7.69%). A pesar de este crecimiento, la investigación periodística indonesia aún no ha logrado un impacto significativo en los estudios periodísticos globales. El estudio recomienda centrarse en la localización del periodismo indonesio, particularmente en el periodismo digital, local y educativo, áreas que aún permanecen poco exploradas.

**Palabras clave:** Cuerpo de conocimiento. Indonesia. Investigación periodística. Revisión de alcance.

## 1 Introduction

Journalism plays an important role in shaping public opinion and supporting democracy, reflecting the culture of the society it serves (Bhowmik, 2022; Kandel, 2024). In Indonesia, this role is becoming increasingly important because of the country's social, cultural, and political diversity, making the media an important space for inclusive discussion (Habibie, 2018; Susanto et al., 2020). Along with developing journalism on various media platforms, journalism provides accurate, relevant, and balanced information (Dame Laoera & Wibowo, 2023; Lunga, 2019).

To fulfill these democratic and social functions, professional journalists must possess a core set of competencies and skills that underpin ethical and practical practice. Verification and accuracy remain fundamental to maintaining journalistic credibility and sustaining public trust (Christofolletti & Becker, 2025; Thomson et al., 2022). Equally critical are independence and adherence to ethical standards, particularly in contexts where political and commercial pressures are pervasive. The ability to balance competing viewpoints is essential for fostering fairness and impartiality in news reporting (Shin et al., 2022). In the contemporary media environment, journalists are also required to demonstrate high levels of digital literacy and technological adaptability to remain relevant across multiple platforms (Dyakina & Artemova, 2021; Lokeswari & Dhingra, 2025; Mills et al., 2018).

In response to these challenges, there is a growing need to map the body of knowledge that underpins journalism practice systematically. Such mapping is crucial for linking empirical journalistic work with academic inquiry, thereby integrating theory, ethics, and professional practice into a coherent framework (Rauchfleisch et al., 2021; Rayyan, 2025). A well-defined body of knowledge serves as a foundation for curriculum development in journalism education and ensures that training remains aligned with contemporary professional demands (Butyrina, 2020). At the same time, the configuration of this body of knowledge also reflects the actual conditions of journalism in practice, as research themes, methods, and debates often emerge in response to the pressing issues journalists face in their daily work. Thus, mapping the body of journalism research constitutes not only an academic exercise but also a systematic evaluation of the real

state, challenges, and transformations of journalism itself.

Within the Indonesian context, research has shown a shift from development journalism to a more critical and oversight-oriented role (Pintak & Setiyono, 2010; Romano, 1999). Indonesian journalists are becoming more professional and educated, with greater support for press freedom, though challenges remain in ethics and professionalism (Adiprasetyo, 2023b; Hanitzsch, 2005). Research has also explored trends in online journalism (Suciati & Puspita, 2019), the balance between idealism and journalistic practice (Rewira, 2024), Islamic journalism (Pintak & Setiyono, 2010; Steele, 2011), citizen journalism (Prawira & Mahamed, 2025; Ritonga & Syahputra, 2019), mobile journalism (Suciati & Puspita, 2019), tensions between journalists and the government in the field of environmental reporting (Bräuchler, 2025) and tourism journalism (Wiksana et al., 2024), which highlight various aspects of journalism in Indonesia.

Although various studies have addressed journalism in Indonesia, there is a gap in longitudinal research that can reveal long-term trends in journalism practices. Adiprasetyo (2023) and Hidayat et al. (2023) have begun mapping journalism research in Indonesia through comprehensive literature reviews and bibliometric analysis. The study by Adiprasetyo (2023) showed an increase in journalism research publications in Indonesia from 2001 to 2020, marked by greater collaboration among researchers and significant contributions from government institutions. This research used the Science and Technology Index (SINTA) database developed by Indonesia's Ministry of Education and Culture. While the SINTA database is relevant for domestic research, it has limitations in terms of international coverage.

Meanwhile, Hidayat et al. (2023) compared journalism research trends between Indonesia and Malaysia in the Web of Science (WoS) database, examining the impact of internet, social, political, and religious factors on journalism culture and press freedom in both countries. Another study by Suciati and Puspita (2019) examined the phases of online media practices in Indonesia, while Sarungu et al. (2023) focused on the historical traces of newspapers in Indonesia. Although these studies provide important insights into the landscape of Indonesian journalism, they remain limited in terms of temporal coverage, comparisons, and sample size, and thus fail to capture the dynamics of Indonesian journalism research fully.

Filling this gap, this study aims to identify the main trends in journalism research in Indonesia that exist in trusted international databases. In doing so, it will also explore the body of knowledge (BoK) of journalism in Indonesia, a task that has yet to be fully addressed in previous research. This mapping of the BoK will serve as a foundational reference, though it comes somewhat late given journalism's long history. The research is particularly timely, as only recently have longitudinal studies emerged, with most publications dating back to 2023. This shift coincides with the establishment of a robust digital infrastructure and government-supported research databases. By mapping existing research trends, this study will not only provide an overview of Indonesian academics' contributions to journalism but also highlight research gaps that warrant further exploration, especially on the global stage. This research is also expected to be a foundation for developing more critical, relevant, and impactful journalism studies in Indonesia.

From the explanation, three important questions will be answered in this scoping review:

1. How has the trend of journalism research in Indonesia developed over time regarding the distribution of years of publication, research topics, theoretical approaches, and methodologies used?
2. What is the body of knowledge of journalism research in Indonesia that covers ethical aspects, basic theories and concepts, journalism practices and techniques, the social and political context of journalism, digital transformation, and recent developments in journalism?
3. What research gaps can be identified in journalism studies in Indonesia, and what are the opportunities for further exploration in this discipline?

## **2 Literature review**

### **2.1 Journalism Body of Knowledge (BoK)**

The Body of Knowledge (BoK) concept generally refers to a structured approach to organizing and disseminating knowledge within specific fields (Bowen & Reeves, 2011; Mattioli et al., 2024). The BoK serves as a comprehensive inventory of intellectual content, including key concepts, terms, standards, and practices (DiBiase et al., 2007; Quezada-Sarmiento et al., 2016). In journalism, the BoK

serves as a framework for understanding the various elements that define the discipline, from theoretical foundations to practical applications (Deuze, 2005). It encompasses key dimensions such as fundamental theories, professional practices, socio-political contexts, and digital transformation – each evolving with technological and societal changes (King, 2008). The BoK also highlights core values like objectivity, accuracy, and independence, which guide ethical and professional standards in journalism globally (Hanitzsch, 2007; Shapiro, 2010).

The BoK of journalism consists of four interrelated dimensions. First, basic theories and concepts, which are essential to understanding journalism's role as a pillar of democracy, highlight its function as more than just disseminating information, but also acting as a watchdog of power (McQuail, 2016). Ethical principles such as objectivity, accuracy, and independence distinguish journalism from other forms of communication. Second, practices and techniques include the technical skills involved in news reporting, interviewing, writing, editing, and publishing. These skills, shaped by technical training and social values, influence the unique practice of journalism within a community (Deuze, 2019; Nielsen, 2017).

Third, journalism is deeply embedded in the social and political context in which it operates. Media systems are shaped by each country's social, political, and cultural factors, with journalism in Indonesia, for example, often advocating for press freedom and democracy. However, local dynamics, such as religious influence and political pressure, lead to practices that may differ from global standards (Hallin & Mancini, 2011). Finally, digital transformation has had a major impact on media practices. Digitalization has changed audience behavior, media business models, and news production and consumption (Nielsen & Schröder, 2014). In Indonesia, innovations such as mobile journalism and the use of artificial intelligence, as well as fake news and social media, are examples of how technology is changing journalistic practices.

For this study, we categorized the Body of Knowledge (BoK) in journalism with clear boundaries. This concept encompasses an understanding of the ethics and functions of journalism but also includes professional practices and the various contexts that shape journalism. The five categories of the BoK, as shown in table 1, are designed to accommodate the four key areas previously identified. These categories were structured to ensure they comprehensively

cover all topics that may emerge in analyzing the articles examined in this research.

**Table 1**  
*Body of Knowledge Journalism Categorization*

| Key Area                 | Description                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Journalism Core          | Principles and values of journalism, including ethics, integrity, ownership issues, the role of journalism in democracy, and the professional development of journalists.                              |
| Journalism's Influence   | The social impact of journalism, including its influence on politics, economics, public opinion, and its use as a tool for social mobilization.                                                        |
| Challenges in Journalism | Current challenges faced by journalists include technological disruptions, the rise of fake news, economic pressures, and privacy concerns.                                                            |
| Journalism Context       | Innovative practices in journalism, such as data journalism, citizen journalism, investigative journalism, peace journalism, collaborative journalism, and mobile journalism.                          |
| Future of Journalism     | The potential development of journalism, including digitalization, social media integration, the role of AI, ethical considerations in AI, and the integration of technologies like blockchain and 5G. |

Through this categorization of the BoK in journalism, this study aims to provide a general overview of the key aspects that shape and influence journalistic practices from a theoretical and practical perspective. The five categories are designed to cover various topics found in the analyzed articles, helping us understand the role of journalism in society, the challenges faced by journalists, and how journalism evolves in response to social, political, cultural, and technological changes.

### 3 Method and data

To provide an overview of journalism research in Indonesia, a scoping review was conducted, a method well-suited for mapping large bodies of literature and identifying key themes and knowledge gaps (Mak & Thomas, 2022; Pham et al., 2014). Unlike a systematic literature review (SLR), which focuses on answering specific research questions with strict inclusion criteria, a scoping review offers a broader exploration of topics over time (Munn et al., 2022; Peters et al., 2021). This approach is particularly useful for tracing the historical development of Indonesian journalism research, which has expanded rapidly in recent years and continues to make significant contributions (Verdejo et al., 2021).

Following the PRISMA-ScR framework, the research involved systematic searches, careful selection of relevant studies, and data mapping to outline trends, recurring themes, and existing gaps (Tricco et al., 2018). This approach involves framing research questions, conducting thorough literature searches, selecting relevant studies, and mapping data to outline trends, themes, and gaps in Indonesian journalism research. The review focuses on literature published in reputable databases like Scopus and Web of Science (WoS), which often highlight domestic issues, making it essential to trace the evolution of these studies and identify areas in need of further exploration.

#### 3.1 Search strategy

The search was conducted between January 9 and January 17, 2025, utilizing the Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) databases, both of which are recognized for their excellence in bibliometric analysis and research evaluation (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016). Scopus provides extensive journal coverage, often surpassing WoS in breadth (Powell & Peterson, 2017), making it especially valuable for capturing a wide array of research trends. In contrast, WoS, with its rigorous selection criteria, offers high-quality, curated sources, particularly beneficial for citation analysis and evaluating research impact (Aksnes & Sivertsen, 2019).

To ensure comprehensive coverage and capture a wide array of relevant studies, we conducted two separate searches using various keyword combinations:



1. First search: Keywords: ("Journalism" OR "Journalist" OR "Mass Media" OR "Media Studies") AND ("Indonesia" OR "Indonesian Media")

2. Second search: Keywords: ("Journalism" OR "Press" OR "Mass Media") AND ("Indonesia" OR "Indonesian Media" OR "Indonesian Press")

These initial searches produced varying results. After reviewing the outputs, we determined that the third keyword combination yielded the most relevant results:

3. Third search: Keywords: ("Journalism" OR "Journalist" OR "Mass Media") AND "Indonesia"

The first, second, and third searches yielded 1.081, 2.303, and 1.021 records, respectively. The third combination was selected not based on the number of results, but due to its higher contextual relevance and substantially fewer out-of-scope articles compared to the first and second queries. Consequently, it ensured a robust dataset for mapping research trends and identifying gaps.

### **3.2 Inclusion and exclusion criteria**

The inclusion and exclusion criteria were carefully defined to select only high-quality, relevant studies. Only peer-reviewed journal articles and conference papers from Scopus and Web of Science were included, while non-peer-reviewed publications, books, and materials from other databases were excluded. The review focused on English-language studies published up to 2024, specifically on journalism and mass media in Indonesia, excluding irrelevant studies. The full criteria are outlined in table 2 below.

Table 2

*Inclusion and exclusion criteria*

| Criteria         | Inclusion                                                 | Exclusion                                                            |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Publication type | Peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers         | Non-peer-reviewed publications, books                                |
| Language         | English                                                   | Other languages                                                      |
| Date range       | Articles published up to 2024                             | Articles published after 2024                                        |
| Database         | Scopus, Web of Science                                    | Other databases                                                      |
| Relevance        | Studies related to journalism and mass media in Indonesia | Studies unrelated to journalism or mass media, and outside Indonesia |

3.3 Screening, selection, and quality control

The screening and selection of studies followed a multi-step procedure. Initially, 1,021 publications were retrieved from Scopus and WoS. These were then filtered according to the established inclusion and exclusion criteria, leaving 904 articles for further review. After assessing the title, abstract, and keywords, the selection was narrowed to 71 articles that met all the inclusion requirements. Table 3 below shows the distribution of sources from the articles:

Table 3

*Source of article databases*

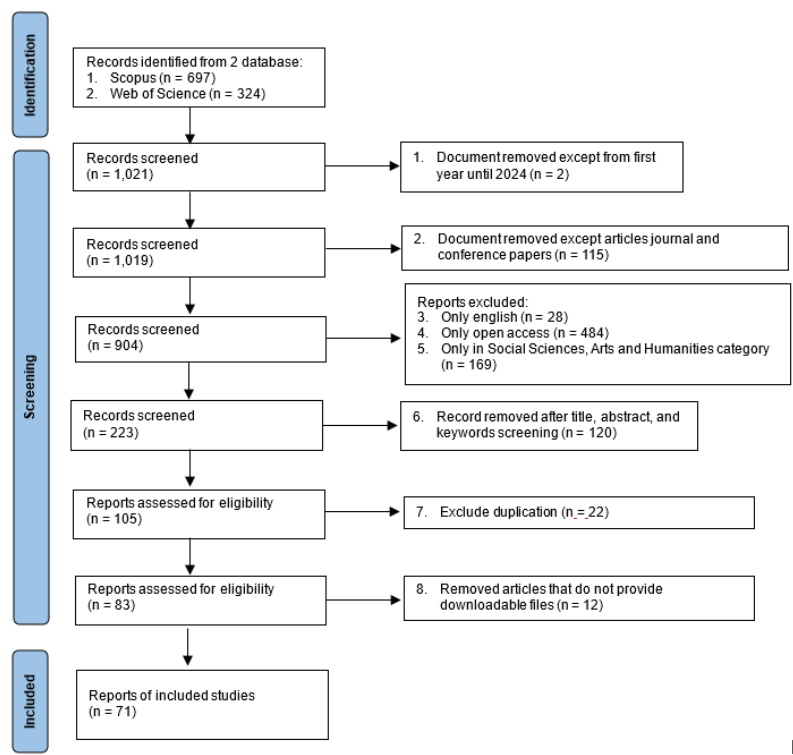
| Source of articles      | Count | Percentage |
|-------------------------|-------|------------|
| Only Scopus             | 38    | 53.52%     |
| Scopus & Web of Science | 22    | 30.99%     |
| Only Web of Science     | 11    | 15.49%     |
| Total                   | 71    | 100%       |

The data screening process in this study follows the standard PRISMA flow diagram, as presented in figure 1, to ensure a systematic and transparent procedure for literature searching, selection, and screening.

While PRISMA-ScR is used as the main reporting guideline, it provides a checklist rather than a specific flow diagram (Tricco et al., 2018). Therefore, the standard PRISMA flow diagram is adopted because it is more practical and widely used in scoping review studies to clearly illustrate the screening stages from the initial search to the final dataset included in the analysis.

Diagram 1

Data Screening Systematics in the PRISMA Flow Diagram



To ensure accuracy and consistency in the scoping review, the study followed established methodological guidelines, including the PRISMA-ScR checklist (Tricco et al., 2018), which emphasizes clear research questions, transparent inclusion criteria, and systematic data extraction to minimize bias (Tricco et al., 2016). The review was conducted under the supervision of a senior lecturer, with a research team consisting of two graduate assistants and one principal investigator, all of whom participated in article screening,

data extraction, and synthesis. Before screening, the team underwent intensive training and discussion to standardize the application of inclusion and exclusion criteria across titles, abstracts, and keywords. Articles were reviewed independently, and any discrepancies in selection or coding were resolved through consensus discussions, with unresolved cases adjudicated by the senior lecturer to ensure reliability and consistency of the final dataset (Gottlieb et al., 2021).

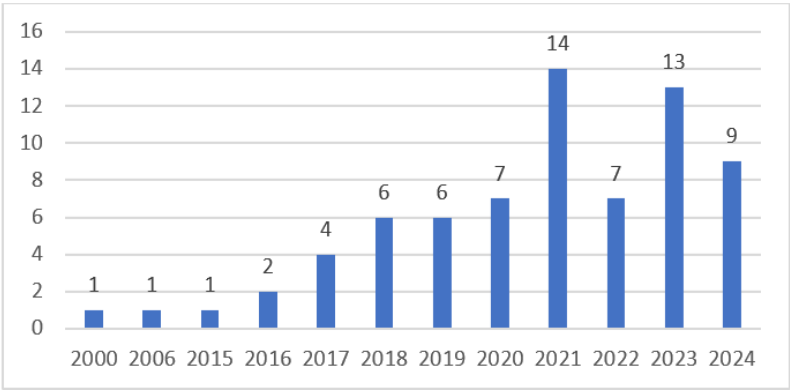
4 Result

4.1 Year of Indonesian journalism research publication

The literature search was conducted from the earliest records available in the Scopus and Web of Science databases, and the first Indonesian journalism publication was found in 2000. As shown in figure 1, subsequent publications appeared in 2006 and 2015, followed by a small increase in 2016 with two publications. However, the growth remained relatively slow during the first two decades. Starting in 2020, the number of publications began to rise more noticeably, peaking at 14 in 2021. Despite a slight decrease in 2022 and 2023, the overall trend has remained upward, with 9 publications in 2024. In total, 71 publications were recorded, indicating that while the pace of growth was slow in the earlier years, there has been a clear increase in interest and output in recent years, reflecting a growing presence of Indonesian journalism research in international academic circles.

Figure 1

*Year of Indonesian journalism research publication*



## 4.2 Distribution of Indonesian journalism articles

The distribution of Indonesian journalism articles, as shown in table 4, indicates that most publications are concentrated in regional journals, such as *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication* from Malaysia and *Pacific Journalism Review*, which is affiliated with universities in Indonesia. This concentration reflects their geographical and institutional proximity. Similarly, national journals include the *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik*, *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, *The Messenger*, *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, and *De Jure: Journal of Law and Sharia*, all of which are published in Indonesia. Nearly half of all publications appear to be influenced more by geographical and institutional proximity than by research quality.

Quantitatively, only 1-3 articles have made it into reputable journals, such as *Media and Communication* (Q1) and *Social Media + Society* (SSCI), which are still too few to raise the profile of Indonesian academics at the international level. Only one article, written by a non-Indonesian academic, has appeared in a high-profile journal such as *Journalism Studies* (Q1). This shows that although there is potential, more significant efforts are still needed to improve the quality of research to be more competitive in top-tier international journals. This challenge is also complex due to several articles published in journals that have been discontinued from Scopus, such as *Humanities and Social Sciences Reviews*, *Journal of Law and Sustainable Development*, *Webology*, and *Informatologia*, which show that Indonesian academics are also trapped in predatory journals.

**Table 4***Research distribution in various journals and conferences*

| Journal Name                                                                                                                                                                                    | Total | Percentage |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|------------|
| 1. Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication                                                                                                                                        |       |            |
| 2. Pacific Journalism Review                                                                                                                                                                    | 19    |            |
| 3. Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik                                                                                                                                                          | 9     | 26.76      |
| 4. Media and Communication                                                                                                                                                                      | 3     | 12.68      |
| 5. Studies in Media and Communication                                                                                                                                                           | 3     | 12.68      |
| 6. Cogent Arts and Humanities, Cogent Social Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences Reviews, Journal of Indonesian Islam, Journal of Infrastructure, Policy and Development (2 articles each) | 12    | 16.9       |
| 7. Lex Scientia Law Review, Webology, and 20 other journals each with one article                                                                                                               | 22    | 30.99      |
| Total                                                                                                                                                                                           | 71    | 100%       |

### 4.3 Topic of Indonesian journalism research

The data shows the distribution of topics in 71 Indonesian journalism research articles, covering a total of 82 topics, as some articles address multiple themes. Table 5 shows that the most common topic is Media Representation, which appears in 21.95% of articles, followed by Journalism Practices and Challenges (18.3%). Other significant themes include Journalism and Media Ethics (11%), Digital Journalism and Social Media, and Covid-19 and Health (9.8%). The Covid-19 and Health category, particularly in 2020-2022, can be seen as highly relevant, as many articles that discuss the pandemic also touch on related topics such as Language and Media Discourse, Gender and Women, and Journalism Practices, indicating a broader impact of the pandemic across multiple aspects of journalism. Less frequent topics include Investigative Journalism (4.9%), Branding and Strategic Communication, Hoaxes and Fake News (3.7%), while other subjects such as Journalism History, Conflict and Humanitarian Issues, Journalism Education, Gender and Woman, and Environmental Journalism each represent

about 2.4% or less of the total. This distribution highlights the variety of issues covered in Indonesian journalism research, with a noticeable focus on the challenges and evolution of journalism in the digital and covid-19 era.

**Table 5**

*Indonesian journalism research topics in international databases*

| Topic                                | Counts | Percentage (%) |
|--------------------------------------|--------|----------------|
| Media Representation                 | 18     | 21.95          |
| Journalism Practices and Challenges  | 15     | 18.29          |
| Journalism and Media Ethics          | 9      | 10.98          |
| Digital Journalism and Social Media  | 8      | 9.76           |
| Covid-19 and Health                  | 8      | 9.76           |
| Investigative Journalism             | 4      | 4.88           |
| Language and Media Discourse         | 4      | 4.88           |
| Hoaxes and Fake News                 | 3      | 3.66           |
| Branding and Strategic Communication | 3      | 3.66           |
| Journalism History                   | 2      | 2.44           |
| Conflict and Humanitarian Issues     | 2      | 2.44           |
| Journalism Education                 | 2      | 2.44           |
| Gender and Women                     | 2      | 2.44           |
| Research Trend Journalism            | 1      | 1.22           |
| Environmental Journalism             | 1      | 1.22           |
| Total                                | 82     | 100            |

**4.4 Theories in Indonesian journalism research**

In the 71 articles analyzed, 32 different theories were used, but 36 articles (50.7%) did not explicitly mention the theory employed. Table 6 shows that the most frequently used theory is Framing Theory, appearing in six articles: five from Entman (1991, 1993) and one from Pan & Kosicki (1993). Other theories that were cited include S-O-R (Stimulus-Organism-Response) (3 articles), Peace Journalism (Galtung, 1990, 2005) (2 articles), and Hierarchy of Influences on Media Content Theory (Shoemaker & Reese, 2013) (2 articles). Several

other theories, such as McDonaldization Theory, Social Action Theory, and Narrative Policy Framework (NPF), were each referenced in one article. Overall, the data highlight the predominance of Framing Theory and the wide variety of other theories used, though half of the articles did not explicitly state their theoretical frameworks.

**Table 6**

*Distribution of theories used in journalism research in Indonesia*

| Theories                                                                                                         | Count | Percentage |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|------------|
| 1. Not explicitly stated                                                                                         | 36    | 50.7%      |
| 2. Framing Theory (Entman, 1991, 1993)                                                                           | 5     | 7%         |
| 3. S-O-R (Stimulus-Organism-Response)                                                                            | 3     | 4.2%       |
| 4. Peace Journalism (Galtung, 1990, 2005)                                                                        | 2     | 2.8%       |
| 5. Hierarchy of Influences on Media Content Theory (Shoemaker & Reese, 2013)                                     | 2     | 2.8%       |
| 6. McDonaldization Theory (George Ritzer, 1993), Social Action Theory (Weber, 1864–1920), and 21 other theories. | 23    | 32.3%      |
| Total                                                                                                            | 71    | 100%       |

**4.5 Methods used in Indonesian journalism research**

The methods used in journalism research in Indonesia are dominated by qualitative methods, with 51 articles (71.8%), followed by quantitative methods with 10 articles (14.1%) and mixed methods with 10 articles (14.1%). In table 7, we can see the variety of techniques used by researchers in each method. For example, the qualitative method, which dominates journalism research in Indonesia, uses various techniques, such as content analysis, in-depth interviews, ethnography, and case studies, to explore media representation, news framing, and journalistic practices. Content analysis is frequently used to examine media coverage and framing. In-depth interviews with journalists and editors are commonly conducted to study the news production process, while ethnographic approaches and case studies provide insights into media interactions and community media practices in Indonesia. The widespread use of qualitative methods highlights the importance of understanding the complex dynamics of journalism, such as how journalists frame



issues, make editorial decisions, and navigate political and economic pressures. However, while these methods provide deep insights, they are limited in their ability to generalize findings.

**Table 7**  
*Distribution of various techniques used in research methods*

| Qualitative                                  | Mixed methods                                               | Quantitative                     |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Qualitative content analysis              | 1. Combination of surveys and interviews                    | 1. Survey                        |
| 2. Interview (semi-structured, in-depth)     | 2. Combination of content analysis and case studies         | 2. SEM                           |
| 3. Ethnography                               | 3. Combination of social media analysis and interviews      | 3. Framing analysis              |
| 4. Discourse analysis                        | 4. Combination of observations and interviews with big data | 4. Bibliometric analysis         |
| 5. Observation (participatory, unstructured) | 5. Combination of questionnaires and FGDs                   | 5. Big data analysis             |
| 6. Case study                                |                                                             | 6. Quantitative content analysis |
| 7. Focus group discussion (FGD)              |                                                             |                                  |
| 8. Biographical study                        |                                                             |                                  |
| 9. Normative approach                        |                                                             |                                  |
| 10. Socio-linguistic analysis                |                                                             |                                  |
| 11. Descriptive research                     |                                                             |                                  |

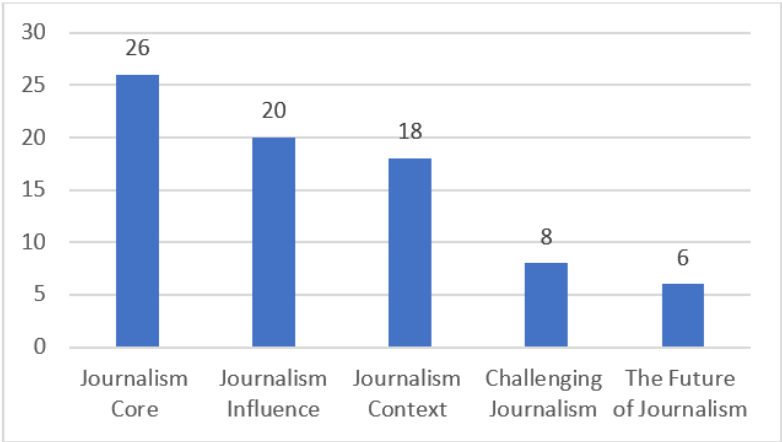
Mixed methods were applied in 10 articles (14.1%), combining qualitative and quantitative techniques to provide a more comprehensive understanding of journalistic phenomena. These studies often combined content analysis with social-linguistic or ecolinguistic analysis, or integrated in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and big data analysis, such as in the case of the Drone Emprit Academic platform. This approach enables data triangulation, enhancing the validity and reliability of findings. Despite its advantages, mixed methods remain rare due to the resource-intensive nature of this approach. Quantitative methods were used in 10 articles as well (14.1%), often involving surveys, statistical analysis, and content analysis to explore factors influencing journalistic practices and trends in online media. While quantitative research is still limited, it is growing, fueled by increased access to digital data and more advanced analysis techniques.

4.6 Body of knowledge in Indonesian journalism research

Among the various categories in the Body of Knowledge (BoK), as shown in figure 2, Journalism Core stands out (33.33%), highlighting fundamental principles such as ethics, professionalism, and the role of journalism in democracy (Deuze, 2005). This category is crucial for assessing journalistic integrity and maintaining public trust, particularly in contexts where press freedom is under threat. Research within the Journalism Core addresses ethical challenges and professional dilemmas across diverse socio-political environments, reinforcing the importance of a free yet responsible press. In Indonesia, where press freedom fluctuates, these core values play a vital role in upholding democratic ideals and sustaining the media's function as a pillar of democracy. It is important to note that the total number of classifications in figure 2 is 78 rather than 71, as several articles engage with multiple themes and are therefore categorized across different BoK domains. The prominence of Journalism Core in Indonesian research reflects a continued prioritization of these foundational concerns, aligning with global trends that emphasize the examination of journalism's normative values amid ongoing digital transformation (Carlson & Lewis, 2015).

Figure 2

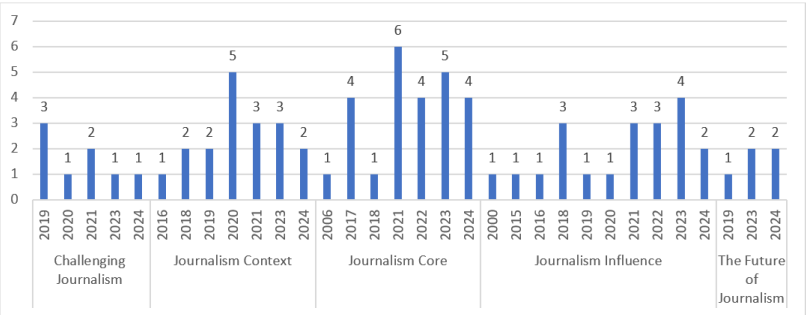
*Distribution of body of knowledge in Indonesian journalism research*



Continuing to figure 3 below, it shows the distribution of various BoKs across different years. The peak of research in 2021 and 2023 reflects an increased focus on freedom of the press, ethical journalism, and the evolving role of journalists in an increasingly complex media landscape. While a focus on these core values remains important, researchers need to balance them with emerging issues to ensure that the field evolves in line with technological and sociopolitical changes. As the most consistent and most studied category, core journalism continues to serve as the foundation of good journalistic practice, providing a framework that reinforces basic principles while adapting to new challenges.

Figure 3

*Distribution of body of knowledge in Indonesian journalism research each year*



A substantial portion of studies fall under Journalism's Influence (25.6%), which examines journalism's broader societal and political ramifications, including media ownership, political economy, agenda-setting, and media framing. This category shows a scattered distribution over the years, with peaks in 2018 (3), 2021 (3), 2022 (3), and 2023 (4), while other years (e.g., 2000, 2015, 2016) have less research. In recent years, particularly between 2021 and 2023, much research has focused on the social impact of covid-19 (see figure 6). The focus on news content in these studies reflects an emphasis on analyzing how the media constructs public perceptions and influences political and economic structures. This research remains important in understanding the media's potential to drive change. However, this research also highlights a limitation in journalism research in

Indonesia, namely the tendency to rely on existing data, which can hinder the exploration of emerging trends or broader social changes. Nevertheless, the importance of researching the role of the media in shaping public discourse and policy remains clear.

The Journalism Context category (23.08%) explores diverse journalistic forms, including alternative media, investigative journalism, and citizen journalism, highlighting how grassroots reporting and non-traditional formats like documentary and collaborative journalism are shaping Indonesia's media landscape. While research in this area peaked between 2019 and 2021, its representation remains lower than that of studies on the core and influence of journalism, signalling that innovations in journalistic practices are still emerging. Meanwhile, categories like Challenging Journalism (10.26%) and The Future of Journalism (7.69%) remain relatively underexplored. Research on issues like misinformation, media ethics, press accountability, and the impact of covid-19 on journalism ethics points to growing concerns over journalistic integrity. However, the lack of studies in 2021, 2023, and 2024 shows that critical issues such as journalist safety, press freedom, and disinformation deserve more attention. Similarly, while there is some focus on digital journalism and future trends like AI and automation, there is a significant gap in forward-looking research on journalism sustainability as digital transformation reshapes the global media landscape. Indonesian journalism research must engage more with these future-oriented challenges to stay relevant in the broader scholarly conversation.

The entire Body of Knowledge (BoK) in journalism has been covered in research in Indonesia, albeit to varying degrees. Core Journalism has received significant attention, reflecting the ongoing evolution of the media landscape in Indonesia, peaking in 2021 and 2023. This focus on core values is particularly important, as the majority of media complaints relate to unprofessional journalism (Press Council, 2023), underlining the need for ongoing research in this area. In contrast, categories such as the influence of journalism, challenging journalism, and the future of journalism show a more uneven distribution, with spikes of interest in certain years (e.g., 2021, 2023), reflecting shifting priorities in this area. Research in the field of the influence of journalism tends to focus on the role of the media in shaping social and political discourse, while the challenges of journalism and the future of journalism are growing themes, with

relatively fewer studies year on year, especially in the context of digital transformation and issues of press freedom. As the number of researchers in the field of Communication Studies increases – supported by more than 650 study programs in Indonesia (Masduki, 2022) –there are significant opportunities for greater collaboration between academics and the media. This can help Indonesian academics to respond to contemporary and future challenges, as well as ensure the continued relevance of journalism research in an evolving media environment.

## **5 Gaps and challenges in Indonesian journalism research**

Journalism research in Indonesia faces significant gaps, especially in the global academic arena. Although research at the local level is quite strong, it has not received much international recognition. The volume of journalism research in global databases such as Google Scholar and national platforms such as GARUDA (<https://garuda.kemdiktisaintek.go.id>) and SINTA (<https://sinta.kemdiktisaintek.go.id>), developed by the Indonesian government, is quite large. However, between 2000 and 2015, only three articles were published internationally, highlighting the limited scope, dependence on conventional research methods, and challenges in accessing prestigious journals.

Despite this, there was a notable increase in publications in 2021, with 14 articles published, largely driven by growing academic pressure and developments in digital and social media. The covid-19 pandemic played a key role in this surge, as many studies were reactive, focusing on journalism's role during the pandemic. However, these studies remain largely situational and have not yet addressed deeper structural issues in Indonesian journalism. To move beyond these temporary achievements, Indonesian journalism research must focus on topics that are not only locally relevant but also hold the potential to contribute to global discourse. Topics explored in this research can be highly localized, yet when examined from a deeper perspective, they can uncover unique gaps and offer new insights needed in global journalism studies. Research on Indonesian media can provide distinct perspectives on social, cultural, and political dynamics not found elsewhere, enriching the global understanding of journalism.

Several topics that remain underexplored in international research, such as peace journalism, gender-based journalism, and the relationship between journalism and hoaxes, warrant further exploration in the Indonesian context. Additionally, issues related to data journalism, environmental journalism, local journalism and community journalism, highly relevant to Indonesia's social and environmental challenges, are rarely examined in depth. Given the rapid transformation of the media landscape through digitalization and social media use, these phenomena should be prioritized. Deeper research on these topics can contribute to global journalism studies, bridging the gap between local research needs and broader international contributions.

Indonesian journalism research tends to be published in national and regional journals, accounting for approximately 52.11% of all publications. Geographic and institutional ties to Indonesia provide easier access for local academics to publish their work. While this offers opportunities for researchers to share their findings with localized audiences, it also reflects limitations in penetrating high-reputation international journals. Most research published in these local journals fails to meet stricter international standards regarding quality, relevance, and impact. Consequently, despite easier access, local publications often contribute less significantly to global academic discourse, ultimately limiting the competitiveness of Indonesian research on the international stage.

Most journalism research in Indonesia is descriptive and field observation-based, with over 50% of studies not deeply grounded in specific theories. While this approach is not entirely negative – often providing valuable insights into the realities of Indonesian journalism – the lack of theoretical development hinders the production of significant theoretical contributions. In terms of theory and research methods, Indonesian studies often adopt a “sufficient understanding” approach. For instance, framing theory, one of the most frequently cited theories, is often merely rehashed without innovation and rigidly applied without deeper exploration or adaptation to local contexts. Although 32 different theories have been utilized in Indonesian literature, they are often applied superficially, lacking depth and originality (Adiprasetyo, 2022).

Methodologically, Indonesian journalism research is predominantly qualitative, particularly critical or constructivist in nature. While these approaches have great potential to uncover deep-

seated dynamics in the field, many studies remain limited to media representation analysis without delving into the actual conditions journalists face. Similarly, while various research methods are employed, they are often used minimally to meet basic standards rather than to achieve comprehensive or innovative outcomes. Research objects are also frequently limited, with studies typically analyzing one to three media outlets over a specific period or relying on interviews with a small number of journalists. When articles about Indonesian journalism present detailed and rigorous methods, they are often written by international academics rather than local researchers, as mentioned by Reid (2016) and the Siregar and Rakhmani (2016) report.

Another gap that is key in journalism in Indonesia is research in the field of investigative journalism. This field, not only investigating politics, but also the economy, the environment, peaceful journalism, hoaxes, and so on, should be a tool for uncovering structural deviations in Indonesia. Only a few major media outlets, such as Tempo and Narasi, are capable of conducting in-depth investigative journalism. At the local level, many journalists do not have the capacity to conduct investigations, even though there are many cases of corruption and abuse of power that are not reported by the national media. Therefore, further research that focuses on the conditions of local journalists and identifies ways to empower them to conduct more independent, critical, and investigative journalism is essential. This approach will enrich the study of journalism and also contribute significantly to the development of journalism oriented towards transparency and accountability in Indonesia.

Local media in Indonesia are vital in delivering regionally relevant news, yet they face significant challenges, particularly regarding research. With over 3.886 online media outlets in the country, only 36% (1.850 media outlets) are verified by the Indonesian Press Council. Press Council considers that each of Indonesia's 514 districts has around 100 media outlets, and the total number of media outlets could reach approximately 51.000 nationwide (Press Council, 2024). Despite their importance, these local media outlets often struggle with limited funding, access to data, and logistical barriers, making it difficult for researchers to study the dynamics of regional journalism.

Research in this area remains underrepresented in reputable international journals, leaving many important insights about local

media unexplored. On top of this, Indonesia's journalism education and research are still catching up to global standards. While progress has been made, there is still a long way to go, with research output gradually increasing but lagging behind other countries. To truly advance journalism research in Indonesia, universities and the government must provide more support, whether in funding, facilities, or research time. Without this, the field risks stagnating, with research either staying within lower-quality publications or being confined to predatory journals that harm academic reputation. Addressing these challenges in local media is crucial to ensure that journalism research in Indonesia grows and thrives.

## 6 Research limitations

This research has several limitations to consider. Although we have tried three different stages of keyword combinations to map out the right journalism research in Indonesia, the choice of keywords can influence the research results, which means further exploration with different keywords is needed. Additionally, limiting the research to only two international databases (Scopus and Web of Science) excludes domestic research, which could have provided a broader view of trends. However, this approach is consistent with the Ministry of Higher Education's standards for lecturer promotions, which prioritize publications in these databases. The categorization process also posed challenges, as selecting appropriate research methods, theories, and topics sometimes required multiple revisions, introducing potential bias. Moreover, due to access restrictions, we only included open-access articles, which limited the scope by excluding relevant paid journal studies. While the study provides a broad overview, it does not delve deeply into specific methods or theoretical frameworks used in the field, mainly due to time and access limitations.

## 7 Conclusion

This overview of Indonesian journalism research up to 2024 shows that, although the growth of articles in international journals has been slow over the last two decades, there has been significant



growth since 2020. The research predominantly focuses on core aspects of journalism, such as its influence on public opinion, politics, and society, and has explored all aspects reflected in the Body of Knowledge (BoK). However, there are glaring gaps in several areas, such as peace journalism, environmental journalism, journalism education, and local journalism, particularly in international publications. These findings highlight the need for Indonesian researchers to adopt a more proactive approach, shifting away from repetitive or reactive topics. The reactive nature of research in Indonesia stems from an unstructured academic environment, where studies are often driven by sudden funding opportunities that dictate specific themes. While government funding includes research roadmaps, these are often hastily created to meet the funders' preferences, rather than reflecting a well-thought-out, long-term research strategy. This leads to a lack of sustained, planned research and leaves significant gaps. Further exploration is needed to understand the underlying factors, particularly in the context of Indonesia's development challenges.

The shift toward a more proactive research approach is crucial, especially considering the unique cultural and political perspectives that local journalism offers. Local journalism is a key area that has been underexplored in global research. By focusing on these unexplored areas, along with adopting innovative research approaches, Indonesian academics can contribute valuable insights to global journalism studies. This can help fill existing research gaps and increase the visibility and impact of Indonesian journalism research on the global stage, highlighting the country's distinct challenges and opportunities in the field.

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