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**PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES OF POLITICAL  
COMMENTARY TELEVISION JOURNALISTS  
IN THE DIGITAL MEDIA ENVIRONMENT**

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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. The Urgency of the Research Topic

In the context of an increasingly robust global digital transformation, the modern media ecosystem is undergoing profound changes in terms of technological structure, models of content production organization, and modes of audience information reception. The development of the Internet, social networks, and digital media platforms has fundamentally transformed the operational modes of journalism, shifting from a one-way communication model to a multiplatform media environment with real-time interaction. Many studies on modern communication suggest that this transition is not merely a process of technological innovation but a comprehensive restructuring of journalistic activities, in which the roles, functions, and professional capacities of journalists must adapt to a convergent media environment [79], [84], [85].

In the field of television, the process of digital transformation further highlights changes in content production and distribution. Television no longer operates primarily under the traditional linear broadcasting model but is shifting toward a multiplatform media ecosystem in which content is distributed simultaneously across television, social networks, and digital platforms. In this context, international studies on multimedia journalism and mobile journalism indicate that television journalists are increasingly required to integrate multiple professional competencies, such as data exploitation, multimedia content production, audience interaction, and adaptation to the digital information environment [80], [103].

These changes necessitate a reconsideration of the structure of professional skills of television journalists in the digital media environment.

In Vietnam, in recent years, a number of studies related to television journalism and political commentary journalism have emerged. Some studies focus on the style of political commentary, genres of political commentary journalism, or the role of television in policy communication and public opinion orientation. In addition, several dissertations and scientific works have examined specific aspects of television activities, such as the influence of television information on audiences or the role of television in political and social activities.

However, most of these studies approach the issue from the perspective of content, genre, or the social function of television, while in-depth studies on the professional skills of television political commentary journalists in the context of changes in the digital media environment remain relatively limited.

From a review of domestic and international studies, several notable research gaps can be identified. First, within the body of research on modern journalism, most studies focus on the professional skills of journalists in general, while the specific group of television political commentary journalists—a distinctive force within the journalistic system—has not been fully examined from the perspective of skill structure in the digital media environment. Second, existing studies often approach the issue from technological or digital communication perspectives but have not established a theoretical framework or a systematic analytical framework to identify the structure of professional skills of television political commentary journalists in the digital media environment. Third, in Vietnam, there remains a lack of empirical studies based on practical surveys conducted at television institutions to comprehensively assess the current state of professional skills of television political commentary journalists in the digital media environment. Meanwhile, from the perspective of the development of Vietnamese journalism, television political commentary continues to play an important role in policy communication, public opinion orientation, and strengthening public trust in the political system.

In the digital media environment, the issue for television political commentary journalists is not merely the addition of certain technological skills to adapt to changes in the working environment. The deeper nature of the issue lies in the reconfiguration of the professional position of a political–social communication subject under conditions where information power has become decentralized, audiences participate in real-time feedback, and platform algorithms have the capacity to strongly shape social attention. Whereas previously the advantage of television political commentary journalists was largely ensured by the credibility of broadcast channels and the legitimacy of journalistic institutions, this advantage can now only be maintained when journalists simultaneously uphold political integrity and analytical and commentary capabilities, while also mastering data, technology, and digital interaction in order to build public trust.

Therefore, researching the topic “Professional Skills of Television Political Commentary Journalists in the Digital Media Environment” is necessary from both theoretical and practical perspectives. The study not only contributes to supplementing the scientific basis for identifying the structure of professional skills of television political commentary journalists in the context of digital transformation but also provides scientific arguments to support training, capacity-building, and the organization of professional activities for television political commentary journalists in Vietnam today.

## **2. Research Objectives and Research Tasks**

### ***2.1. Research Objectives***

The dissertation aims to study and clarify the theoretical and practical foundations of the professional skills of television political commentary journalists in the digital media environment; on that basis, to identify the system of professional skills of television political commentary journalists in the digital media environment, analyze the current state of these skills among this group at several television institutions in Vietnam, and thereby propose solutions and recommendations to refine and enhance the professional skills of television political commentary journalists in the digital media environment..

### ***2.2. Research Tasks***

First, to clarify a number of concepts and theoretical and practical issues related to the professional skills of television political commentary journalists in the digital media environment, thereby identifying the system of professional skills and the criteria for evaluating the professional skills of television political commentary journalists in the digital media environment.

Second, to survey the current state of the professional skills of television political commentary journalists at VTV1 (Vietnam Television), HTV9 (Ho Chi Minh City Television), and NTV (Nghe An Radio and Television Station, now Nghe An Newspaper and Radio–Television Station), in order to identify specific manifestations, achievements, and limitations in the professional skills of this group.

Third, on the basis of theoretical analysis and empirical investigation, to propose a number of solutions and recommendations aimed at enhancing the professional skills of television political commentary journalists in the digital media environment.

## **3. Research Subjects and Scope**

### ***3.1. Research Subjects***

The research subject is the professional skills of television political commentary journalists.

### ***3.2. Research Scope***

Regarding the survey period, the study was conducted from January 2023 to January 2025. This period corresponds to a phase during which television stations have actively participated in

the digital media environment while continuing to undertake the production of key television political commentary programs.

The author selected the activities of television political commentary journalists at three television channels based on the following criteria: reputable television channels with numerous prominent political commentary programs; representation at both central and local levels; representation of different regions; large audiences; and leadership in efforts to adapt to the digital media environment:

VTV1 of Vietnam Television is a comprehensive news and political commentary channel covering the most important national current affairs issues. It is also the first channel of Vietnam Television and currently broadcasts 24 hours a day. Content on VTV1 includes daily news bulletins and various programs, among which long-established and reputable television political commentary programs such as Today's Issue, Events and Commentary, and Face to Face are notable. VTV1 is also home to a highly reputable team of television political commentary journalists nationwide. At the same time, VTV1's political commentary programs are widely distributed across Vietnam Television's digital platforms and attract high levels of viewership and interaction.

HTV9 is one of the first two channels of Ho Chi Minh City Television, functioning as a News–Political Commentary–General channel. HTV9 is among the local television channels with a strong tradition in political commentary content and is one of the essential channels for audiences in Ho Chi Minh City and surrounding provinces. HTV9 features representative television political commentary programs such as Policies and Life, Citizens Ask – Authorities Answer, Events and Issues, and Safeguarding the Party's Ideological Foundation. Many political commentary television works of HTV9 have received high awards in national journalism competitions. In addition, HTV9's programs are widely disseminated on the digital platforms of Ho Chi Minh City Television, particularly through the New Generation News Platform, along with multimedia news formats deployed on the station's digital platforms.

NTV of Nghe An Radio and Television Station (after June 2025, Nghe An Newspaper and Radio–Television Station) is one of the local television channels that places emphasis on investing in the development of television political commentary programs such as Dialogue and Current Affairs Roundtable. Notably, NTV's political commentary television programs are broadcast live both on air and on digital platforms, attracting large audiences and high levels of interaction. According to the evaluation criteria of the Ministry of Information and Communications in 2024, NTV is also among the local television channels rated at an excellent level in digital transformation..

#### **4. Theoretical Foundations and Research Methods**

##### ***4.1. Theoretical Foundations***

The dissertation is grounded in a systematic set of viewpoints derived from Marxism–Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought on journalism and communication, as well as the viewpoints and policy orientations of the Party and the State regarding the development of journalism, television, and digital transformation in the field of journalism. It also refers to modern perspectives and incorporates knowledge from published scientific works on communication and journalism theory, political commentary journalism, television political commentary, digital communication, and the professional skills of television political commentary journalists.

The dissertation also draws upon several communication theories for its research, including:  
Agenda-setting theory

According to this theory, mass media may not directly create public opinion, but it has the ability to set the agenda for public opinion. Bernard Cohen (1963) identified this when he wrote the well-known statement: the press “may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about.” “Issues that media organizations regard as ‘major affairs’ for coverage are also considered ‘major affairs’ as reflected in public perception” [21]. The greater the attention given by media organizations, the higher the level of public concern. This influences what the public thinks about and subsequently how they think. “Mass media performs the function of setting the agenda for the public.” There are three pathways through which journalism sets the agenda for the public: space (airtime), frequency, and prominence (prime time).

#### Two-step flow of communication theory

The two-step flow theory states that, first, messages are transmitted to opinion leaders—those who are well-informed, possess specialized knowledge, and have credibility and influence over others’ opinions; and second, messages are transmitted from opinion leaders to the broader public, thereby forming public opinion (Katz, 1957). Empirical studies based on this theory show that opinion leaders are individuals who possess information and social status within a given community, while other members lack or do not have such information and must rely on opinion leaders to obtain it.

#### Information society theory

The concept and idea of the information society emerged alongside the development of digital technology. The ways in which people connect, communicate, work, learn, and engage in entertainment have changed due to the Internet, social networks, mobile devices, and other technologies. As a result, the information society has created unprecedented opportunities for entrepreneurship, innovation, and social transformation [91].

Information society theory not only describes the context but also provides a fundamental theoretical framework for positioning the role, functions, and the entire system of professional skills of television political commentary journalists in the digital media environment. It explains why skills must change and establishes objective requirements for journalism in a society where information becomes a core resource and source of power.

Specifically, this theory is directly applied to:

Explaining the urgency and nature of skill transformation in Chapter II of the dissertation: this theory provides a scientific answer to the question of why television political commentary journalists cannot maintain outdated skills, because the entire structure of society has changed.

Providing the basis to affirm that, in the “network society” (Castells, 1996), power no longer lies in the ownership of broadcasting channels but in the capacity to manage and direct information. This directly leads to the requirements for skills analyzed in Chapter II.

Serving as the foundation for the vision and strategic solutions in Chapter III of the dissertation: understanding the nature of the information society enables the proposal of solutions that not only address immediate issues but are also forward-looking. These proposals do not stop at training specific skills but involve changing mindsets, building digital culture within press organizations, and establishing new workflows suitable for non-linear information flows.

Information society theory enables the dissertation to move beyond merely describing skills, toward providing a profound and systematic explanation of the historical repositioning of television political commentary journalists within a fundamentally transformed social and communication order.

The application of the above theories in the dissertation does not remain at the level of citation or general theoretical framing but is implemented according to the following logic:

First, using theoretical arguments related to the role of journalists in agenda-setting, the two-step flow of communication, and the information society to analyze and identify the skills and criteria of professional skills of television political commentary journalists in the digital media environment.

Second, through empirical surveys at selected television institutions, the dissertation evaluates the current state of professional skills of television political commentary journalists, thereby identifying manifestations that are consistent or inconsistent with the theoretical arguments presented.

Third, on the basis of comparing the theoretical framework with empirical findings, the dissertation identifies similarities and differences between theory and practice in the Vietnamese context, particularly specific factors related to politics, organizational structures, and the professional culture of revolutionary journalism.

Fourth, the proposed solutions are not directly inferred from theory but are developed based on empirical findings analyzed and compared with the theoretical framework. Accordingly, theory serves as an analytical and orientational tool, while solutions are derived from specific research results within the Vietnamese context.

#### ***4.2. Research Methods***

To address the scientific tasks set out in the study, the author employs the following research methods:

The method of theoretical analysis and synthesis is used to review books and relevant materials related to the research topic in order to synthesize a theoretical and practical foundation serving the research objectives. This is one of the methods applied throughout the entire research process of the dissertation, particularly during the literature review stage...

The method of classification and systematization of theory is used to categorize research information into related thematic groups aligned with the research direction, including studies on political commentary journalism and television, journalism in the digital media environment, and journalists' professional skills in the digital media environment. ...

The participant observation method, conducted within the defined temporal and spatial scope of the study, is used to capture detailed characteristics of the professional skills of television political commentary journalists in the digital media environment. This method is particularly advantageous for the author, who has many years of experience as a television political commentary journalist at VTV1. With nearly 28 years of experience in television political commentary, including direct participation in political commentary programs and training activities at various television stations nationwide, the author has, in effect, accumulated extensive experience in applying participant observation to the professional skills of television political commentary journalists. As a result, the data collected are substantial, detailed, comprehensive, and highly reliable.

The method of quantitative and qualitative content analysis is used to examine television political commentary programs within the research scope, recording, listing, and describing elements manifested in both content and form that relate to the criteria for evaluating the professional skills of television political commentary journalists in the digital media environment. The author applies this method to analyze 700 television political commentary programs on VTV1, HTV9, and NTV. For example, quantitative content analysis is used to count programs that employ data, include graphical illustrations, or utilize online interview formats, while

qualitative content analysis is used to assess hosting styles, tonal characteristics of narration, and similar elements. Statistical, analytical, and comparative methods are then applied to the collected data in order to produce appropriate and scientifically grounded assessments of the manifestations of professional skills of television political commentary journalists in the digital media environment as reflected in these programs.

The method of in-depth interviews is conducted with relevant subjects, including television political commentary journalists, editorial leaders, and experts in television political commentary, in order to obtain descriptive information, perceptions, modes of thinking, explanations, differing viewpoints, as well as causes and solutions concerning issues related to the professional skills of television political commentary journalists in the digital media environment. ...

The expert method is used to access and incorporate the expertise of distinguished political commentary journalists and television political commentary journalists who are not part of the research sample, as well as leading experts in political commentary journalism and digital communication, in order to collect scientific insights and record evaluative assessments of the professional skills of television political commentary journalists in the digital media environment, serving as a basis for supplementing and refining the research.

### 5. Research Questions

- First Research Question:

How does the digital media environment influence the professional competencies of political commentary television journalists? What are the characteristics, requirements, and evaluation criteria of these professional competencies within the digital media environment?

- Second Research Question:

How are political commentary television journalists perceiving, adapting, and updating their professional competencies in the digital media environment? What achievements and limitations are evident in this process, and what are the underlying causes of these successes and shortcomings?

- Third Research Question:

In the rapidly evolving and highly dynamic digital media environment, what solutions can support political commentary television journalists in transforming, updating, and strengthening their professional competencies, thereby enhancing the quality of political commentary programmes and reinforcing the role of political journalism within the digital ecosystem?

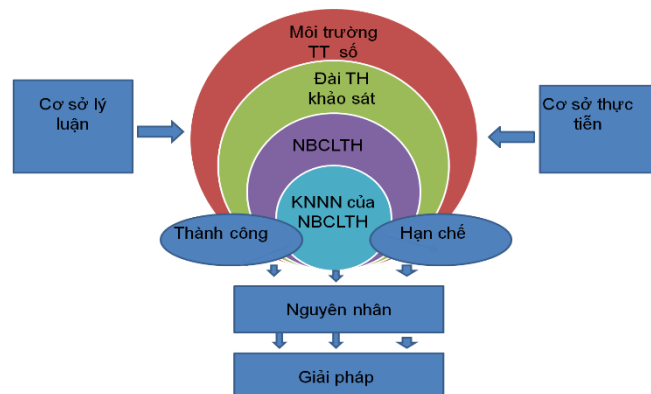
### 6. Analytical Framework

#### 7. Novel Contributions of the Dissertation

The dissertation makes several theoretical and practical contributions:

First, it enriches both theoretical and empirical discourse on the professional competencies of political commentary television journalists, political journalism, televised political commentary, digital communication, and most critically the competency requirements of political commentary journalists within the digital media environment.

Second, it provides a grounded empirical study and synthesises professional experience from leading political commentary broadcasting institutions in Vietnam today, including VTV1 of



Vietnam Television, HTV9 of Ho Chi Minh City Television, and NTV of Nghe An Radio Television (later merged into Nghe An Newspaper and Radio Television). These findings contribute substantive insights into current practices and competency development in the digital era.

Third, the dissertation identifies existing shortcomings, formulates recommendations, and proposes enhanced competency standards for political commentary television journalists in the digital media environment. It develops a modern competency framework designed to improve the quality and effectiveness of political commentary content on television, thereby strengthening the role and influence of revolutionary journalism within the contemporary digital ecosystem.

## **8. Theoretical and Practical Significance of the Dissertation**

### **8.1. Theoretical Significance**

The dissertation serves as a valuable reference for studies related to political journalism, televised political commentary, digital journalism, and the professional competencies of political commentary journalists in the digital media environment. It advances and refines key concepts in political journalism, political commentary broadcasting, digital communication, and competency development for political commentary journalists.

The research also updates emerging trends in journalism practice, highlighting new skillsets required for political commentary journalists and their practical applications. The competency framework developed in this dissertation offers a structured model for modern political commentary journalism.

These contributions provide a theoretical basis for enhancing political commentary broadcasting and strengthening the broader field of political journalism in the new communication environment. Ultimately, the dissertation reinforces the internal capacity and societal influence of Vietnam's revolutionary press in the process of nation-building toward socialism.

### **8.2. Practical Significance**

The findings of this dissertation are applicable to the practical operations of television broadcasters in Vietnam. The research provides an empirical basis for assessing and re-evaluating the professional competencies of political commentary television journalists in the digital media environment, thereby reflecting these competencies against relevant theoretical frameworks to identify gaps that require further development, emerging trends that must be updated, and new approaches in political commentary broadcasting.

The results offer valuable insights for broadcasting organisations seeking to strengthen their teams of political commentary journalists and enhance the quality, effectiveness, and societal impact of political commentary television programmes in the digital environment. This contributes to the development of political commentary broadcasting as a key instrument for communicating Party and State policies, safeguarding the ideological foundation, countering harmful and distorted information, and serving as a channel for rigorous social oversight and public critique.

The dissertation also serves as a useful reference for lecturers, students, and researchers in journalism and communication particularly those working in political journalism, televised political commentary, and digital communication. Furthermore, it provides a valuable resource for policymakers in the fields of culture and ideology, as well as those working in propaganda and public education, offering insights into the essential competencies required of political commentary journalists in the digital era. This enables more practical, context-sensitive directives aimed at strengthening the role of political journalism on the ideological and cultural front.

## **9. Structure of the Dissertation**

The dissertation “*Professional Competencies of Political Commentary Television Journalists in the Digital Media Environment*”, in addition to the Introduction, Literature Review, Conclusion, References, and Appendices, comprises three chapters:

**Chapter 1:** Theoretical foundations related to the professional competencies of political commentary television journalists in the digital media environment.

**Chapter 2:** The current status of the professional competencies of political commentary television journalists in the digital media environment.

**Chapter 3:** Emerging issues, solutions, and recommendations for enhancing the professional competencies of political commentary television journalists in the digital media environment.

### **REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH**

The review of related research in the original manuscript systematically organises three major research orientations directly relevant to the dissertation: (1) Studies on political journalism and televised political commentary; (2) Studies on journalism in the digital media environment; and (3) Studies on the professional competencies of journalists in the digital media environment. This structure reflects a logical approach that progresses from foundational theories of political journalism, to the transformation of the media ecosystem, and finally to the competency requirements of journalists in the digital era. Each orientation is examined through domestic and international scholarly works, accompanied by critical analysis identifying the academic gaps that the dissertation seeks to address.

#### **1. Studies on Political Journalism and Televised Political Commentary**

Classical Vietnamese works from the 1990s to the present have clarified the nature, functions, and defining characteristics of political journalism. Studies by Tạ Ngọc Tấn (1995), Trần Quang (1996), Trần Thế Phiệt (1997), Hà Minh Đức (1997), Trần Bá Dung (2005), Nguyễn Văn Dũng (2010), Nguyễn Thế Kỷ (2014), Nguyễn Thị Trường Giang (2018), among others, affirm that ideological grounding, orientational purpose, critical and analytical reasoning, persuasive argumentation, and explicit articulation of viewpoints constitute the core essence of political journalism. Political journalism is inseparable from the competence and authority of political journalists those regarded as “authoritative journalists” capable of persuading and orienting public opinion through knowledge, analytical capacity, and firm political integrity.

While the concepts of political journalism and televised political commentary are explicitly addressed in Vietnamese scholarship, foreign works by authors such as Blumler & G. Jay (1995), Edward J. Lopez (2010), Mitchell Stephens (2014), Abigail Steinberg (2020), and Kevin Loker (2018) do not directly engage with these terms. Instead, they employ conceptually related notions such as “interpretive journalism,” “analytical journalism,” “opinion journalism,” “public affairs television,” or “knowledge-based journalism.” Although terminologically different, these concepts share essential attributes with Vietnamese political journalism analysis, viewpoint expression, argumentation, and persuasion. Thus, these studies offer valuable comparative insights, especially on the evolving role of knowledge-driven journalism in the digital era.

Research on televised political commentary delves more deeply into the expressive requirements of audiovisual communication, including imagery, sound, spoken language, pacing, and presentational style. Vietnamese studies (e.g., Phan Xuân Sơn, Nguyễn Ngọc Oanh) analyse techniques of television commentary and debate, the linguistic features of political discourse, the role of presenters, and modes of argumentation in political communication. Collectively, these works have established a robust theoretical foundation for political journalism defining roles and functions, categorising genres, tracing historical development, and analysing the linguistic

discursive dimensions of political communication. However, specialised studies on televised political commentary remain limited in both quantity and depth.

## **2. Studies on Journalism in the Digital Media Environment**

Both domestic and international research recognises that digital communication has fundamentally transformed the processes of news production, distribution, and audience reception. International scholars such as Jenkins, Pavlik, Allan, Deuze, and Domingo emphasise media convergence, multimedia journalism, convergent newsrooms, digital platforms, and social networks as new public spheres. These studies highlight the roles of speed, data-driven journalism, audience interactivity, and the shifting economic models of journalism.

In Vietnam, studies by Đinh Văn Hùng, Lê Quốc Minh, Nguyễn Thành Lợi, Nguyễn Thị Trường Giang, Đỗ Thị Thu Hằng, Trần Quang Diệu, Bùi Chí Trung, as well as monographs published by the Vietnam Journalists Association and major broadcasting organisations, analyse in depth the influence of the digital media environment on journalistic workflows. These studies confirm that journalists must not only operate across multi-platform systems but also work according to nonlinear logic, interactive logic, and audience-centric logic aligned with digital consumption behaviours.

While this body of research provides essential context on the transformations of journalism and broadcasting, it pays limited attention to political journalism and televised political commentary specifically.

## **3. Studies on the Professional Competencies of Journalists in the Digital Media Environment**

Most studies in this group examine the general professional competencies of journalists in the digital environment, such as information search skills, data processing, interviewing, editing, reporting, video production, mobile journalism, multimedia workflows, and audience interaction. Internationally, there is extensive research on data journalism, mobile journalism (MoJo), AI-assisted journalism, and real-time interactive journalism.

In Vietnam, works by scholars and journalists such as Đinh Văn Hùng, Nguyễn Thị Trường Giang, Đỗ Thị Thu Hằng, Nguyễn Thành Lợi, Trần Quang Diệu, and Bùi Chí Trung highlight emerging competencies required of journalists in the digital age. However, most of these publications remain general, trend-oriented, or practice-based. No study offers an in-depth examination of the professional competencies of political commentary television journalists particularly in a context where the digital environment is reshaping journalistic thinking and practice.

## **4. Contributions of the Literature Review**

The literature review accomplishes several key objectives:

It systematically organises the relevant research orientations, creating a solid theoretical foundation for the dissertation.

It affirms the intellectual continuity and development of scholarship on political journalism, televised political commentary, journalism in the digital media environment, and professional competencies of journalists.

It clearly identifies the academic gap: the absence of comprehensive research on the professional competencies of political commentary television journalists in the digital media environment.

It establishes the basis for the subsequent chapters on theoretical frameworks, current practice, and proposed solutions.

## **CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL ISSUES RELATED TO THE PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES OF POLITICAL COMMENTARY TELEVISION JOURNALISTS IN THE DIGITAL MEDIA ENVIRONMENT**

### **1.1. Key Concepts Related to the Professional Competencies of Political Commentary Television Journalists in the Digital Media Environment**

#### ***1.1.1. Fundamental Concepts of Professional Competency***

The dissertation begins by defining *skills* as cognitive operations and behavioural actions, with emphasis on the manner of performing an action and the effectiveness of that action. *Professional competency* is viewed as the set of actions, operations, and behaviours that enable the performance of specialised tasks, including the use and manipulation of technical and professional tools. To speak of competency is to speak of one's ability to apply acquired knowledge to practical activities.

Within the scope of this dissertation, professional competency is interpreted narrowly to align with the specific nature of political commentary television journalism. The study examines professional competencies as operational actions enabling journalists to perform specialised tasks effectively within the constraints of time and production workflow. These competencies may be categorised according to phases of producing political commentary television content and according to different levels of proficiency.

#### ***1.1.2. Fundamental Concepts of Political Commentary Television Journalists***

The dissertation synthesises definitions of political commentary television journalists based on established classical sources. Political commentary is conceptualised as a major genre of journalism that provides deep analysis, thorough interpretation, and clear articulation of positions or viewpoints regarding major public issues. Its ultimate aim extends beyond information provision to *persuasion*, achieving ideological orientation and behavioural influence, thereby contributing to social consensus around a defined direction.

Televised political commentary is a subgenre within television journalism, inheriting all features of political journalism while maximising the expressive affordances of audiovisual media. It is most prominently realised in regular commentary and debate programmes.

A political commentary journalist is viewed as a “commentator,” an individual who directly expresses the ideological position of the media organisation and reconstructs social reality through logical argumentation, thereby shaping appropriate public attitudes. Nguyễn Văn Dũng refers to this group as “authoritative journalists” those with deep multidisciplinary knowledge, firm political integrity, and professional credibility capable of influencing public opinion.

In television, research affirms that the commentator must be involved throughout the entire creative process from conceptualisation and scripting to on-air presentation because coherence between ideological content and expressive form is essential. Based on these analyses, the dissertation defines political commentary television journalists as the intellectual architects of commentary programmes, who occupy a central role in producing televised commentary and debate. They not only gather information but also design logical argument structures, present viewpoints, moderate expert dialogues, and embody the programme's voice and identity.

Their subject matter includes complex and significant public issues. Through knowledge, political acumen, and professional skills, they perform deep analysis, rigorous interpretation, and clear articulation of viewpoints. Their ultimate objective is persuasion orienting public cognition and behaviour, contributing to social consensus around politically significant directions.

#### ***1.1.3. Professional Competencies of Political Commentary Television Journalists***

The dissertation further clarifies that these competencies embody both the features of political journalism and the technical expressive features of television. The study systematises core competency groups expressed through sequential creative operations in the production of political commentary television content:

*Topic selection competency:*

Amid numerous concurrent public issues, political commentary journalists must identify topics that satisfy two criteria: timeliness and relevance to public concern, and issues that require analytical interpretation. Effective topic selection demonstrates accurate identification of public needs and ongoing debates.

*Competency in gathering, verifying, researching, and processing information:*

Political commentary journalists must search for, collect, and synthesise information rapidly, accurately, and comprehensively. A commentary product requires “sufficient information, arguments, reasoning, and evidence.” Beyond general information-gathering, these journalists must accumulate domain-specific knowledge and construct logically grounded argumentation.

*Idea development competency:*

This involves transforming a topic into a programme outline that includes structural design, argumentative sequencing, and key thematic components, alongside selecting appropriate presentation methods to ensure coherence and engagement.

*Scriptwriting and commentary writing competency:*

This skill involves writing commentary texts or formulating interview questions (for debate formats). It requires precision, expressiveness, and argumentative sharpness to persuade audiences.

*Video processing competency:*

Successful commentary programmes rely on compelling visual imagery. In many cases, journalists must also record, edit, and process audiovisual material.

*Interviewing competency:*

With the growing prominence of debate formats, journalists must cultivate networks of expert guests, select appropriate participants, and craft insightful questions that guide discussion while illuminating core issues requiring public orientation.

*Presenting and anchoring competency:*

Political commentary journalists must demonstrate the ability to host programmes, manage unexpected situations during live broadcasts, and maintain a distinct political commentary style characterised by confident, persuasive delivery.

*Audience interaction competency:*

To fulfil their orientational role, these journalists must create interactive spaces that allow for explanation, clarification, and dialogue, thereby increasing social consensus and reducing perceptual gaps.

**1.1.4. Fundamental Concepts of the Digital Media Environment**

Drawing on analyses of the concepts *environment* and *digital communication*, as well as the structural configuration of the media environment and its correlation with the journalism system,



the dissertation defines the *digital media environment* as the environment in which communication activities are conducted through digital technologies an environment that exerts a powerful influence on the journalism system it surrounds, shapes emerging trends in journalistic practice, and simultaneously generates both unprecedented opportunities and significant challenges for journalism.

Research by scholars in Vietnam and abroad demonstrates that digital media has engendered a new ecosystem characterised by hyper-connectivity, hyper-interactivity, hyper-storage, hyper-search, and hyper-textuality. These features fundamentally transform communication structures: from a centre periphery model to a networked model, and from one-way information flows to multidirectional, real-time interaction.

The dissertation identifies the rise of multiple phenomena: multi-platform journalism, convergent newsrooms, social media, digital publics, user-generated content, mobile journalism, data journalism, and artificial intelligence. These developments reshape journalistic workflows and compel journalists to transform both professional mindsets and competencies.

Audiences are no longer passive recipients but active participants verifying, commenting on, and influencing information flows. The traditional *gatekeeper* role is thus profoundly challenged, requiring political commentary television journalists to act as *information verifiers* and *discussion leaders* with professional integrity and authority.

#### ***1.1.5. Emerging Trends Influencing the Professional Competencies of Political Commentary Television Journalists in the Digital Media Environment***

Alongside the rise of digital communication, numerous new trends have become increasingly prominent in journalism and media. Within the scope of this dissertation, several trends exerting direct impact on journalistic competencies especially those of political commentary television journalists are identified:

##### *Multimedia Journalism:*

Derived from the Oxford definition of *multimedia* as “the use of more than one type of media for communication,” multimedia journalism integrates text, still images, animation, graphics, audio, video, and interactive programmes to enhance attention, increase engagement, ensure credibility, and strengthen persuasive power in message delivery.

##### *Multi-platform Journalism:*

This refers not only to multimedia content production but also to the distribution of journalistic content across various platforms such as print newspapers, online newspapers, radio, television, mobile applications, and social networking sites.

##### *Social Media:*

Cross-border platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok have amassed billions of users globally, including over 70 million users in Vietnam. Social media, built upon digital technologies, contains massive, diverse, real-time, and multi-dimensional information, with exceptionally high degrees of interaction, sharing, and personalisation. However, it also poses serious risks due to the prevalence of unverified, inaccurate, or misleading content, as well as dangers related to fraud, privacy violations, unauthorised data harvesting, surveillance, and other forms of cybercrime. Social media is also a primary environment for fake news, disinformation, and misinformation.

##### *Mobile Journalism (MoJo):*

Mobile journalism involves using mobile devices as primary tools for reporting. An increasing number of journalists have become skilled mobile journalists (MoJos), proficient in using

smartphones for news gathering and production with growing levels of complexity, speed, and quality.

#### *AI-assisted Journalism:*

Artificial intelligence can serve as a powerful assistant throughout the journalistic workflow from information gathering and idea generation to content production and distribution optimisation. However, AI also presents significant challenges, as AI-generated information may be inaccurate, lacking in human sensitivity, ethical responsibility, and social accountability. Therefore, political commentary television journalists must clearly understand AI's strengths and limitations to ensure that AI is used as a supportive tool rather than a source of error in content production.

#### *Data Journalism:*

Amid the explosion of information in the digital environment, journalists must find new methods for information delivery. Data journalism through systematic data collection, analysis, filtering, and visualisation enables journalists to uncover stories within datasets, explain complex issues, and construct journalistic content grounded in quantitative evidence.

#### *Digital Publics:*

Today's audiences are largely digital publics groups capable of using digital technologies and platforms proactively to access and interpret information, and to engage in multi-level, multi-form interaction. Digital publics simultaneously receive journalistic content and act as content creators, sharing, modifying, and amplifying information within networked environments.

## **1.2. Characteristics of the Professional Competencies of Political Commentary Television Journalists in the Digital Media Environment**

### ***1.2.1. Characteristics of the Professional Competencies of Political Commentary Journalists***

In the dissertation, the professional competencies of political commentary journalists are identified through three core characteristics: a strong ideological foundation, rigorous argumentative capacity, and clearly defined professional standards. These three pillars form the basis for all professional operations in political journalism.

#### **1.2.1.1. Sharp Political Thinking and Firm Ideological Stance**

The dissertation emphasises that sharp political thinking is not only an ethical requirement but also the *primary professional competency* of political commentary journalists. Journalists must be able to decode the essence of events within complex news flows; recognise patterns within seemingly fragmented phenomena; and identify risks, trends, and deep socio-political implications of information for political and social stability.

A firm ideological stance functions as the “cognitive compass” that enables journalists to properly frame issues, choose the correct analytical angle, and handle information in accordance with the principles of revolutionary journalism. This is a prerequisite for avoiding influence by fleeting media impulses particularly in a digital environment characterised by misinformation, distortion, and algorithmic manipulation.

#### **1.2.1.2. Argumentative Competence and the Ability to Construct Scientific Reasoning**

Argumentative competence is the most distinctive feature separating political commentary journalists from other journalistic groups. The dissertation underscores that political argumentation is grounded not only in reasoning but also in evidence, data, historical and political context, and causal relations among social phenomena. Political commentary journalists must organise arguments according to a logical structure, producing analytical sequences that are

compelling, coherent, and capable of shaping public cognition. This constitutes the foundation for orienting public opinion, engaging in social critique, and strengthening public trust in truth.

#### 1.2.1.3. Command of Persuasive Political Language

Political language is inherently rational, normative, and direct, yet it must also convey ideological depth concise but not reductive, strong but not coercive. The ability to use political language effectively lies in transforming thought into expression that is logically structured, sharp, and orientational. For political commentary television journalists, this competency is indispensable, as commentary scripts, leads, and spoken delivery constitute the direct bridge between editorial viewpoints and the public.

### ***1.2.2. Characteristics of the Professional Competencies of Political Commentary Television Journalists***

When political commentary is transferred to the television medium, these competencies acquire additional audiovisual requirements. Journalists must not only argue through language but also through visual, auditory, and structural elements of the programme. This is a central emphasis of the dissertation.

#### 1.2.2.1. The Transformation from Textual Argumentation to Audiovisual Argumentation

Television argumentation differs fundamentally from print argumentation in that it must be *visually expressed*. Images serve as evidence, sound becomes the rhythm of argumentation, and commentary bridges the journalist's analytical thinking with the audience's perceptual experience. Political commentary television journalists must know how to select images with strong informational weight, manage sound appropriately, structure editing rhythms effectively, and modulate commentary to produce integrated persuasive power. This is an especially complex competency requiring sensitivity to visual logic and proficiency in organising audiovisual structures.

#### 1.2.2.2. Competence in Production Coordination and Team-based Thinking

The dissertation demonstrates that televised commentary is the outcome of a multi-professional system involving reporters, editors, camera operators, video editors, graphic technicians, and production coordinators. Political commentary journalists must coordinate seamlessly with the production team, articulate ideas clearly, manage the production workflow, and ensure unity between ideological intent and technical expression. Collaborative thinking thus becomes a crucial component of professional competency.

### ***1.2.3. Characteristics of the Professional Competencies of Political Commentary Television Journalists in the Digital Media Environment***

In the digital media environment, these competencies acquire additional characteristics shaped by technological transformation.

#### 1.2.3.1. Integration and Convergence of Competencies: From Deep Specialisation to Comprehensive Multi-functionality

Political commentary television journalists in the digital era must become “convergent actors”: simultaneously gathering information, analysing data, editing visuals, presenting on air, and interacting with audiences. The traditional division of roles is no longer viable in multi-platform newsrooms. As a result, professional competencies evolve from *specialisation* to *multi-functionality*, while retaining the core nature of political commentary.

#### 1.2.3.2. Non-linear Production Thinking and Digital Content Distribution

The dissertation clarifies that televised political commentary in the digital environment no longer follows the linear sequence of “record edit broadcast.” Instead, production becomes non-linear: audience feedback, social media data, search trends, and interaction rhythms all influence

programme structure. Journalists must master digital content distribution strategies: platform optimisation, timing, formatting, and dissemination tactics.

#### 1.2.3.3. Interaction and Orientation of Digital Publics

Digital publics are both receivers and critics and even co-creators of content. Political commentary journalists must be able to read real-time public sentiment, engage in two-way interaction, moderate social discussions, and maintain their role as “public opinion navigators” within an open communication environment.

#### 1.2.3.4. Mastery of Emerging Technologies: Data Journalism and Artificial Intelligence in Political Commentary

The dissertation affirms that political commentary television journalists must be able to exploit big data, use verification technologies, analyse communication metrics, and employ digital technologies to strengthen argumentative power. While technology offers critical support, political integrity and professional judgment remain decisive, preventing overdependence on algorithms and ensuring responsible, ethical journalistic practice.

### **1.3. Requirements and Evaluation Criteria for the Professional Competencies of Political Commentary Television Journalists in the Digital Media Environment**

#### ***1.3.1. Competence in Tracking Public Sentiment and Interacting with Audiences on Social Media***

In the digital media environment, audiences become active agents participating directly in the process of information construction. The dissertation identifies *competence in tracking digital public sentiment* as the ability to monitor, analyse, and accurately interpret the emerging social trends circulating on social media platforms. Political commentary television journalists must be able to read public psychology, attitudes, concerns, anxieties, and expectations, as well as detect early signs of misinformation and distorted narratives.

Interaction with audiences is no longer a supplementary activity but a key criterion for assessing journalistic capacity in public opinion orientation. This competency requires a firm political stance, responsible engagement, and skilful public dialogue conducted in the capacity of a representative of the revolutionary press.

#### ***1.3.2. Competence in Using Digital Tools for Information Gathering, Verification, and Processing***

The dissertation establishes that information in the digital environment is dense, fast-moving, and highly noisy. Therefore, information-gathering skills must be accompanied by source verification, data cross-checking, accuracy assessment, and detection of information manipulation. Political commentary television journalists must master advanced search tools, media monitoring systems, open data repositories, and analytical software to ensure that all argumentative claims are grounded in verified truth.

This competency also includes the ability to organise documentation, build information dossiers, and transform collected data into persuasive evidence within political commentary programmes.

#### ***1.3.3. Competence in Using Artificial Intelligence in Programme Production***

The dissertation approaches AI competence as a *supportive capability*, not a replacement for journalistic essence. Political commentary television journalists must know how to use AI to optimise production workflows: data analysis, audio separation, noise filtering, voice transformation, text extraction from images, trend detection, or content-structure suggestions.

However, AI use must always be accompanied by ethical judgment to avoid algorithmic dependency or producing output that compromises the integrity of political commentary. AI is a tool; the ideological vision of the journalist is irreplaceable.

#### ***1.3.4. Competence in Using Data within Programmes***

The dissertation regards data journalism as an inevitable trend in modern televised political commentary. This competency includes collecting, analysing, visualising, and interpreting data through charts, infographics, digital maps, and other high-visibility formats. Political commentary television journalists must be able to transform abstract numbers into compelling arguments that help audiences grasp the essence of complex issues through quantitative evidence. This skill is especially crucial amid rising demands for objectivity in public debate.

#### ***1.3.5. Competence in Filming and Video Processing with Mobile Devices***

According to the dissertation, political commentary television journalists cannot rely solely on technical teams. The ability to use mobile devices to record footage, conduct rapid edits, and handle basic sound and lighting is a minimum requirement in the digital environment. This ensures the timeliness of political information and enhances journalistic autonomy.

Journalists must be able to capture decisive moments, tell stories visually, and produce raw materials that serve as powerful argumentative evidence for commentary programmes.

#### ***1.3.6. Competence in Conducting Online Interviews***

Online interviews have become a critical tool in digital communication. Political commentary journalists must be able to establish connections quickly, manage conversational flow, ask incisive questions, handle unexpected situations, and maintain the atmosphere of political dialogue even without physical presence. This competency requires technical control, psychological sensitivity, and skilful moderation to ensure depth, coherence, and relevance of information.

#### ***1.3.7. Competence in On-Air Presentation Adapted to Digital Audiences***

Presentation skills in the digital era require political commentary television journalists to adapt their performance style: more concise, direct, interactive, yet firmly grounded in political commentary. The lead-in and spoken cues must serve as the “ideological anchor” of the programme, enabling viewers to grasp information quickly, retain key messages, and trust the conveyed viewpoints.

Political commentary television journalists must articulate clear arguments, maintain a professional standard of tone, and demonstrate confident on-air presence in alignment with the rapid consumption behaviour of digital audiences.

## **Chapter 2: The Current Status of the Professional Competencies of Political Commentary Television Journalists in the Digital Media Environment**

### **2.1. Overview of the Television Channels Included in the Study**

#### ***2.1.1. VTV1***

VTV1 is the nation’s central news and political commentary channel, functioning as a benchmark-setting institution for professional standards in producing political commentary content. Its multilayered editorial procedures, stringent data verification requirements, and high information density create a working environment that demands exceptional analytical, argumentative, and information-processing competencies from journalists.

#### ***2.1.2. HTV9 (Ho Chi Minh City Television)***

HTV9 represents a dynamic urban television model, demonstrating strong adaptation to digital communication through flexible production processes, intensive newsroom activity, and robust multi-platform convergence. Political commentary journalists at HTV9 must combine traditional

commentary skills with real-time public engagement and digital-content management competencies.

### 2.1.3. NTV (*Nghe An Radio & Television Station*)

(from June 2025: *Nghe An Newspaper & Radio Television Convergent Newsroom*)

NTV embodies the characteristics of local television, with content closely tied to grassroots socio-political realities. This requires journalists to possess deep knowledge of local social dynamics and maintain a consistent political stance. The transition toward a convergent “Newspaper Television Integrated Newsroom” model beginning in 2025 demands that political commentary journalists enhance their multimedia competencies, data-handling skills, and public-interaction capabilities in the digital environment.

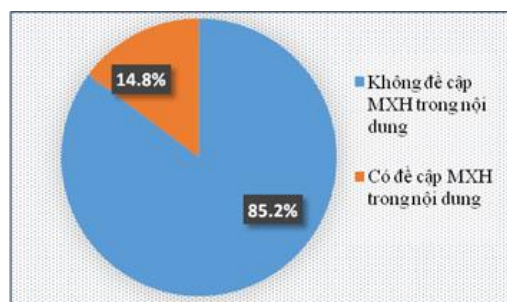
## 2.2. The Current Status of the Professional Competencies of Political Commentary Television Journalists in the Digital Media Environment

### 2.2.1. Competence in Monitoring Public Sentiment and Interacting with Audiences on Social Media

Findings show that all political commentary television journalists participating in in-depth interviews acknowledge that digital public-sentiment monitoring is a decisive competency in selecting topics and structuring programme content. Journalists must actively participate in online groups, forums, and digital communities, treating them as informational sources for identifying emerging issues and gauging public concern.

Figure 2.1. *Political Commentary Programmes Featuring Content Related to Social-Media Public Sentiment*

Statements such as “it helps us detect public trends and interests” or “ensures accuracy and relevance in topic selection” reveal the centrality of this skill. Public-sentiment monitoring is not limited to surface-level observation; it is described as a process of analysing public communication behaviours and psychological patterns through both qualitative and quantitative data. Journalists must understand the mechanisms behind the formation of “public-opinion hotspots” and apply analytics tools trend tracking, hashtags, sentiment indicators to interpret socio-political dynamics.



Regarding audience interaction, the original findings indicate that this remains an under-standardised area of practice. Although journalists recognise the importance of interaction in maintaining public trust in political commentary, most have not developed a consistent feedback mechanism. In the context of rising information pressure, the insight that “one misstatement can be irreparable” reflects the communicative risks inherent in the digital environment, contributing to overcautious behaviour and reduced interaction.

The overall situation reveals that while journalists correctly perceive the importance of public-sentiment monitoring, direct engagement with audiences remains weak and inconsistent across individuals. Feedback an organic continuation of sentiment monitoring is rarely practised systematically. In most cases, journalists respond only when issues arise, rather than engaging proactively.

This hesitation stems from the perceived risks of miscommunication, coupled with traditional newsroom habits. In-depth interviews confirm that errors in the digital environment have long-term consequences, leading to cautious and irregular engagement. This not only weakens

journalist public connection but also diminishes the programme’s ability to orient public opinion an essential function of political commentary television.

### 2.2.2. Competence in Gathering Digital Information and Documentation

The original findings indicate that digital information-gathering skills have expanded significantly in scope and tools. Journalists must master information retrieval across major platforms such as Google, Facebook, X, YouTube, and TikTok, employing advanced search techniques to filter and synthesise data. The use of tools such as Google Advanced Search, TinEye, Yandex Image Search, InVID, Crowdtangle, or TweetDeck/X Pro demonstrates that information verification is increasingly regarded as an ethical imperative of the profession.

The evidence shows that information gathering is not limited to rapid searching; rather, it encompasses issue detection and the establishment of analytical angles to ensure that all information incorporated into political commentary programmes is verified, accurate, and aligned with editorial orientation.

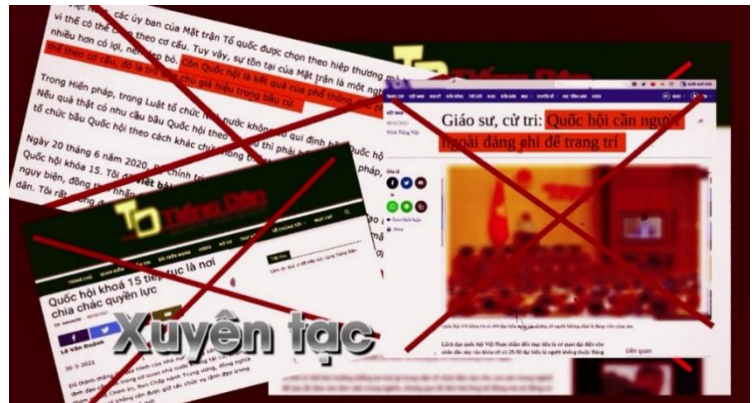


Figure 2.1. Social-Media Content Extracted in the Programme “Đổi diện”, Often Accompanied by Slash Markers

However, the current situation reveals a gap between professional requirements and actual capacities. Many journalists are not yet proficient in the full cycle of digital searching, verification, and analysis particularly in relation to fast-changing digital materials.

### 2.2.3. Competence in Using Artificial Intelligence

Survey results show that while no programme officially announces the use of AI during production, all political commentary journalists interviewed acknowledged employing AI in various tasks: information gathering, text summarisation, question formulation, script drafting, graphic design, and content moderation.

As one journalist noted, AI “helps summarise long documents to capture key points”, yet many also warned that AI can generate content that is “generic” or lacking an independent analytical perspective. Concerns about data security were strongly expressed in in-depth interviews, alongside a general caution about using AI in the absence of clear regulatory guidelines.

The use of AI is widespread but spontaneous, lacking guiding frameworks or ethical standards. Journalists often “verify all AI-generated information”, edit it, or rewrite entire segments. Some reporters said they use AI mainly for format conversion, such as “transcribing audio into text”, but avoid using AI for large-scale data collection due to concerns about reliability and copyright.

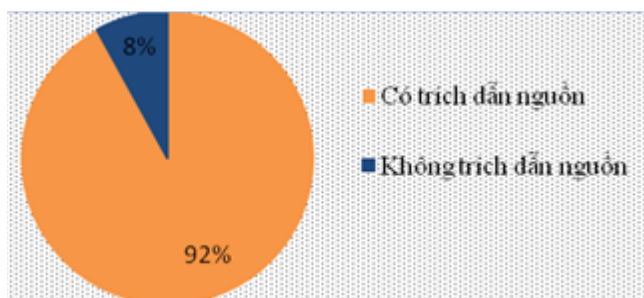
The findings indicate that AI competence is emerging but far from reaching a level of mastery, hindered by a lack of systematic regulation and professional guidelines to safeguard the integrity of political commentary broadcasting.

### 2.2.4. Competence in Using Data within Programmes

This competency displays the most measurable indicators in the survey. Among 700 programmes analysed, 87.7% used data to support argumentative structures. Charts, graphics, and maps were employed to enhance persuasiveness and improve audience comprehension.

However, the largest limitation is that most programmes merely present data without analysing its implications, causes, or significance. Another recurring weakness is the absence of source attribution. Numerous programmes present numerical information without specifying its origin. The material describes this as a common habit, reflected in vague references such as “experts say” or “surveys indicate”. One political commentary journalist admitted that data only acquires real value when “the source is cited and the journalist is accountable for it before the audience”.

Figure 2.8. Proportion of Programmes with Source Attribution When Using Data



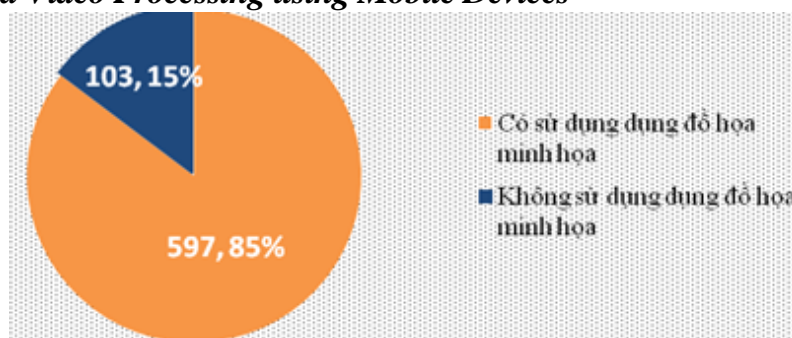
The documents repeatedly emphasise that,

when used properly, data becomes “the new language of political commentary”, enabling journalism to persuade through knowledge. However, in the current state, data analysis and source attribution skills remain significantly limited.

### 2.2.5. Competence in Filming and Video Processing using Mobile Devices

Survey results from 700 programmes show that this competency is virtually absent in practice.

Figure 2.9. Proportion of Political Commentary Programmes Using Data-Visualisation Graphics



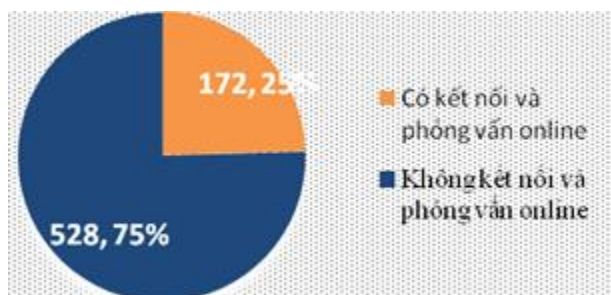
Only two programmes featured footage recorded via mobile phones both from NTV’s “Đôi thoại cùng chúng tôi”. Meanwhile, all political commentary journalists interviewed confirmed that mobile phones are “fully viable and effective” reporting tools, enabling rapid recording, instantaneous transmission, and support for various technical tasks.

The absence of mobile-shot materials in programmes stems from multiple factors: technical barriers, traditional reporting habits, concerns over affecting cameramen’s roles, and most prominently the perception that mobile footage is “incompatible with professionalism and editorial authority”. The lack of formal training further widens the gap between awareness and actual practice.

### 2.2.6. Competence in Conducting Online Interviews

The findings show that 24.5% of the political commentary programmes surveyed included online interviews, concentrated primarily in international news and commentary formats. Programmes such as *Toàn cảnh thế giới* (VTV1) and *Bàn tròn thế sự* (NTV) demonstrate the ability to establish multi-location connections and engage experts from various regions inside and outside Vietnam.

Figure 2.10. Proportion of Political Commentary Programmes Using Data-Visualisation Graphics



A notable example is the November 2024 edition of *Bàn tròn thế sự*, in which all four guests participated online from the United States, the Middle East, and Ho Chi Minh City. In-depth

interviews indicate that journalists believe the effectiveness of online interviews depends less on the technical format than on the quality of the invited experts.

However, online interviews require reliable technical infrastructure, foreign-language proficiency, LED screen systems, and coordinated support from multiple production units. These operational demands explain why the frequency of online interviews remains modest, despite being widely recognised as an inevitable trend in digital communication.

### **2.2.7. Competence in On-Air Presentation Adapted to Digital Audiences**

Survey findings indicate a clear distinction between script-based presentation styles and conversational presentation styles. Pre-recorded programmes such as *Đổi diện*, *Góc nhìn*, and *Người trong cuộc* exhibit an explanatory, teleprompter-dependent delivery. In contrast, live or dialogue-driven programmes such as *Bàn tròn thể sự* and *Đổi thoại cùng chúng tôi* display more spontaneous, interactive, and flexible presentation styles.



Figure 2.7. Political Commentary Journalists Hosting *Sự kiện & Bình luận* (left) and *Vấn đề hôm nay* (right) on VTV1

The findings describe that political commentary television journalists in the digital media environment must renew their delivery styles: reducing didactic expression, increasing naturalness, employing conversational language, and using body language to create a sense of proximity. Some livestreamed social-media programmes have expanded the space for anchors to express their individual style and enhance audience engagement.

## **2.3. Evaluation of the Professional Competencies of Political Commentary Television Journalists in the Digital Media Environment**

### **2.3.1. Strengths**

Survey and interview results indicate that political commentary television journalists have undergone a notable shift in both awareness and practice regarding digital-media requirements. They demonstrate a deep understanding of new competencies, from monitoring public sentiment and adjusting programme formats to cultivating a presence on social media as influential commentators.

In practice, they have leveraged their strengths in multi-source information gathering, mastered advanced search tools, begun integrating AI into early stages of production, and demonstrated foundational competency in data interpretation. Several journalists have shown solid capability in online interviewing, adaptable on-air presentation, and developing personal branding, thereby reinforcing their role in shaping public opinion in the digital environment.

### **2.3.2. Limitations**

Alongside these strengths, the study identifies several prominent limitations. Competence in audience interaction and digital feedback remains weak and lacks proactive mechanisms. Skills in information verification and source attribution are not yet standardised, especially regarding social-media content. Data analysis competencies remain shallow, often limited to presenting numbers without interpretation. The application of AI is spontaneous and lacks verification protocols.

Furthermore, several essential digital competencies such as search-engine optimisation (SEO), programme promotion, and platform-specific content creation remain underutilised.

### ***2.3.3. Causes of the Limitations***

These limitations arise from multiple factors:

Television organisations lack comprehensive digital strategies and have not fully established procedures or regulations for digital-era workflows.

Programme structures evolve slowly and include few interactive components.

Social-media information is complex and often distorted, creating challenges for verification.

Technical infrastructure and support personnel are not sufficiently synchronised, constraining the adoption of new skills.

## **Chapter 3: Solutions for Enhancing the Professional Competencies of Political Commentary Television Journalists in the Digital Media Environment**

### **3.1. Key Issues Concerning the Professional Competencies of Political Commentary Television Journalists in the Digital Media Environment**

#### ***3.1.1. The Knowing Doing Gap***

Survey results indicate that although many political commentary television journalists clearly recognise the need to renew their competencies in the digital media environment, programme structures that have remained largely unchanged “for at least a decade” leave them with insufficient space for practical application. The absence of interactive components on digital platforms further restricts opportunities to practise essential skills such as audience feedback and multi-platform engagement, thereby widening the gap between knowledge and practice.

#### ***3.1.2. Profound Shifts in the Role of Political Commentary Television Journalists***

The role of political commentary journalists has expanded beyond its traditional boundaries, requiring them to engage in direct argumentation, public dialogue, digital-platform presence, and the cultivation of personal branding. Programmes such as *Bàn tròn thể sự* and *Đổi thoại cùng chúng tôi* illustrate a shift toward conversational, improvisational, and interactive presentation styles clear indicators of the expanded role demanded by the digital ecosystem.

#### ***3.1.3. Intensifying Pressures from the Digital Media Environment***

Political commentary television journalists face a landscape characterised by misinformation, “view-driven pressure,” and the risk of reputational damage stemming from “a single careless statement.” Verification of information originating from social media has become increasingly difficult, placing political commentary journalists “perpetually in a reactive position within the mainstream news cycle.”

#### ***3.1.4. Lack of Clear Mechanisms and Policies within Television Organisations***

Television institutions lack comprehensive digital workflows, including regulations on social-media use, guidelines for employing AI and big data, and protocols for audience interaction. Journalists are often left to navigate new competencies on their own, resulting in uncertainty, inconsistency, and reduced motivation for innovation.

#### ***3.1.5. Mastery of Digital Platforms as a Critical Competency***

Some political commentary journalists have begun experimenting with livestreaming, short-form videos, and multi-platform content creation. However, mastery of digital platforms remains uneven due to insufficient tools, inadequate training, and a lack of institutional support.

### **3.2. Solutions and Recommendations for Enhancing the Professional Competencies of Political Commentary Television Journalists in the Digital Media Environment**

#### ***3.2.1. Technological Solutions***

Investing in technology constitutes the core of any strategy aimed at strengthening the professional competencies of political commentary journalists. Modern technological infrastructure provides the material foundation for intellectual creativity; sovereign digital

platforms safeguard national autonomy in information dissemination; and artificial intelligence expands journalists' cognitive and interactive capacities.

Every investment in technology is an investment in journalistic thinking, professional integrity, and the political standing of Vietnamese journalism within the global communication landscape.

Therefore, developing robust digital infrastructure and native digital platforms is not merely a means to improve journalistic productivity; it is also a strategic imperative for protecting information sovereignty, preserving national identity, and reaffirming the orientational role of Vietnamese political commentary broadcasting in the era of digital transformation.

### ***3.2.2. Training Solutions***

Mastery of digital technologies extends far beyond the mechanical use of tools; it encompasses the capacity for analytical thinking, creative problem-solving, evaluative judgment, and effective communication within a digital environment. For political commentary television journalists, digital competence must be intrinsically aligned with ideological competence, socio-political analytical capacity, and political-critical reasoning. They cannot merely excel in filming, editing, or post-production; they must also understand how data operates, how algorithms distribute information, and how technology can be employed to safeguard truth.

The dissertation argues that training digital competencies for political commentary journalists must be understood as a long-term developmental trajectory incorporating three dimensions: awareness, skills, and professional attitude. Training cannot be confined to short-term workshops; it must become a continuous institutionalised process integrated into the newsroom's creative cycle.

### ***3.2.3. Policy and Institutional Mechanisms***

Both the State and media organisations must update, codify, and operationalise regulations concerning the rights, obligations, and responsibilities of journalists in the digital media environment. Legal frameworks must clearly define how digital practices are embedded into the daily workflow of political commentary production teams.

Additionally, guidelines on digital ethics and online safety must be strengthened particularly obligations related to information verification, data security, handling misinformation, and protecting the institutional reputation of media organisations. A modern legal framework must be strict in principle yet flexible in implementation, encouraging creativity while preventing manipulation by unverified digital content.

However, no legal framework alone is sufficient without institutional concretisation through a strategic digital roadmap at each broadcasting organisation. In the multi-platform era, every newsroom must articulate a strategic vision regarding the positioning, function, and value of political-commentary content within the global information ecosystem.

From the perspective of creativity, broadcasting organisations should establish periodic format-renewal processes and organise specialised creative units dedicated to researching audience behaviour and experimenting with innovative content models. This is part of an internal creativity incentive system in which every idea is evaluated fairly and granted controlled opportunities for experimentation.

### ***3.2.4. Cognitive and Mindset Transformation***

The **digital-first mindset** represents a strategic paradigm shift in which all production, distribution, and evaluation workflows prioritise digital platforms. Broadcast content becomes an edited, expanded, or restructured extension of the original digital product. This shift requires political commentary journalists to reconceptualise what constitutes a “journalistic product.”

Whereas televised output once represented the “final destination,” digital content now becomes the starting point of the creative process.

Political commentary must therefore be structured in multilayered formats: concise, direct, and engaging content for digital platforms; followed by extended analytical and interpretative segments for broadcast news or television talk shows.

“Digital-first” is not a technical adjustment but a comprehensive transformation of cognitive processes from topic selection to storytelling logic and impact evaluation. The journalist is no longer merely a messenger but a creator of an ongoing intellectual dialogue with the public in an open communication space.

### **3.2.5. Organisational Restructuring**

A newsroom organised along the principle of convergence marks a structural turning point in the evolution of political commentary broadcasting. Moving from a fragmented, closed, and rigid model to one that is integrated, flexible, and open is not simply an administrative reform it is a philosophical shift that places the political commentary journalist at the centre of the creative process.

Only when a truly convergent newsroom is formed can the relationship between ideas, technology, and human capital be optimised. Such a structure fosters a modern political journalism ecosystem distinctively Vietnamese capable of shaping public discourse and competing within the globalised communication space.

### **3.2.6. Solutions from the Journalists Themselves**

The most decisive solution for the advancement of political commentary broadcasting in the digital era is the enhancement of journalists’ self-directed learning, creativity, and capacity to build autonomous professional identity.

As one expert observed: “*A political commentary television journalist must be both a political journalist and a digital media specialist.*” These dual roles can only be reconciled when the journalist continuously strives to surpass past achievements, embracing constant self-renewal. Another expert insightfully remarked: “*Political commentary journalists must view technology as an opportunity, not a threat. Otherwise, they risk becoming narrators of the past instead of guides to the future.*”

### **3.2.7. Recommendations**

The dissertation offers several strategic recommendations:

#### *(1) For the State:*

The State must not only act as a regulatory authority but also as a strategic investor and institutional architect for the development of political journalism and political commentary broadcasting in the digital environment. Financial support, infrastructure investment, tax incentives, human-resource training, and public private cooperation are not merely supports for journalism they are mechanisms for protecting national ideological foundations, the communicative space of the nation, and Vietnam’s soft power in the global information era. A well-designed policy framework will enable political commentary journalism not merely to survive but to lead national digital transformation in media.

#### *(2) For broadcasting organisations:*

Television stations must approach digital transformation proactively, systematically, and decisively, treating it as a long-term strategic orientation rather than a short-term technological project.

#### *(3) For political commentary journalists:*

They must become active agents of interaction, dialogue, and public guidance in the open digital communication environment. As one expert emphasised: *Political commentary journalists must recognise their new role: to interact with audiences rather than simply “lecture from the screen”; to orient public opinion; to combat misinformation and hostile narratives; and to become influential figures on digital platforms.*

## CONCLUSION

The study on the professional skills of political commentary television journalists in the digital media environment affirms that digital transformation is generating profound shifts within the journalistic ecosystem. These shifts extend beyond technological adaptation and platform restructuring; they require a reconfiguration of the entire value system and professional standards that have long been associated with the nature of revolutionary journalism. Traditional political-commentary competencies ideological depth, critical rigor, normative clarity, humanistic orientation, and societal guidance can only maintain their effectiveness when integrated with data-analytic capacity, information verification skills, platform literacy, and multidirectional interaction with the public.

The seven groups of skills identified in this dissertation fully reflect the new demands placed upon political commentary television journalists operating within a fragmented, nonlinear, and algorithm-driven media sphere, where the velocity of information dissemination and the competition for public trust have intensified dramatically. The findings demonstrate that recognising and cultivating this integrated skill set is not only an academic necessity but also a practical imperative derived from the requirements of policy communication, the struggle against misinformation and hostile narratives, and the mission of reinforcing public confidence in authoritative information.

The dissertation simultaneously provides a significant scientific foundation for the standardisation of professional competencies within convergent newsrooms and for the enhancement of political-commentary content quality in contemporary television. While there remain multiple avenues for future research, the results achieved contribute meaningfully to addressing existing scholarly gaps and offer strategic orientation for broadcasting institutions in fulfilling political mandates and strengthening societal trust in the era of digital communication.

**LIST OF AUTHOR'S PUBLICATIONS  
RELATED TO THE DISSERTATION TOPIC**

1. Nguyen Thu Ha (2021), *A New Perspective on Political Commentary Journalism*, *Journal of Journalists*, No. 451, September 2021, ISSN 0886-7691, pp. 52–54.
2. Nguyen Thu Ha (2022), *A New Perspective on Political Commentary Journalism*, *Journal of Political Theory and Communication*, Special Issue No. 1-2022, ISSN 1859-1485, pp. 210–212.
3. Nguyen Thu Ha (2022), *Combating Harmful Information on the Internet from a Communication Governance Perspective*, *Journal of Journalists*, No. 457, March 2022, ISSN 0886-7691, pp. 14–17.
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