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# THE INEVITABILITY OF DIGITAL PUBLIC SPACE HETEROREGULATION: FRAMING THE PORTUGUESE<sup>2, 3</sup>

*Abstract:* The expectations and behaviors transferred to digital environments harbor broader structures and historical processes that predate the establishment of digital culture itself. For this reason, the actions of individuals in the digital arena represent different forms of technology appropriation. Digital platforms are now recognized as utopian because they amplify new censorious mechanisms. On the one hand, hate speech and various forms of violence shape a new media system; on the other hand, they allow individuals and groups to attempt to condition and silence digital public spaces, especially the female universe. Journalistic activity has always been recognized as an ethical and deontological duty to combat censorship. Based on semi-structured indepth interviews with 31 Portuguese women journalists, this research aims to identify the follow-up of Portuguese media to the successive decadent transformations of digital culture. Using the descriptive approach of thematic analysis, the results expose the inoperability of self-regulation of media and journalists. The bias of traditional values of denunciation is developed in internal rhetoric of violence normalization suffered by journalists, the subsequent disregard of audience participation and the practice of some censorship practices in journalistic contents. This scenario has potentiated the invasive temptations of heteroregulation by the political power, delegating to a public institution the competences for determining which digital contents are worthy of "sanctioning regimes".

*Keywords:* digital platforms, violent participation, journalism, regulation frameworks, heteroregulation.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>This research is part of the master's thesis "Liberdade de expressão e discurso de ódio: Consequências para o campo jornalístico", which was defended on September 2, 2021, at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University of Coimbra, Portugal, and published as a book by Media XXI. This project was funded by Santander Universities Portugal (reference BOLSAS SANTANDER FUTURO 2ª EDIÇÃO 2020/2021). We are grateful for the support of the Project "Violência online contra as mulheres: Prevenir e combater a misoginia e a violência em contexto digital a partir da experiência da pandemia COVID-19", financed with national funds through the Foundation for Science and Technology - FCT - (reference GENDER RESEARCH 4 COVID-19-058).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Received December 2021 / Accepted February 2022

### 1. Introduction

The expectations and behaviors transferred to digital environments entail broader historical structures and processes that predate the establishment of digital culture itself. For this reason, the actions of individuals in the digital arena tend to evidence different forms of technology appropriation. An example of this is the incivility or the violence, according to the broad sense of the problem (Costa, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c). In this context, hate speech has emerged as one of the most expressive forms of digital violence today (Marwick & Miller, 2014), being the participatory spaces hosted by the media preferential places for the practice of individual and collective hostile conducts (Carlsson & Nilsson, 2016; Gardiner, 2018; Milioni, Vadratsikas & Papa, 2012; Nielsen, 2014; Reader, 2012; Simões, 2021; Topinka, 2018; Wright, Jackson & Graham, 2020).

Digital platforms are now recognized within a democratic utopia, whose deliberative value has been lost with the amplification of new censorship mechanisms (Carpentier, Dahlgren & Pasquali, 2013; Costa, 2021c; Jenkins & Carpentier, 2013; Wright et al., 2020). This toxicity has been used by individuals and groups who aim to condition and silence digital public spaces, driving a reshaping of a new media system characterized by the chaos of journalists' and media self-regulation inaction. If by disproportionately targeting the female universe (Amaral & Simões, 2021; Costa, 2020; Simões, Amaral, & Santos, 2021; Sundén & Paasonen, 2018), violence impedes the achievement of justice and gender equality, its normalization in the media organizational routines implies arduous challenges for the profession, namely by the pressure that they exert on the productive process and professional authority, often the target of contestation, in a historical moment of rise and consolidation of populisms and the extreme right in the international political landscape (Camponez, 2018; Costa, 2021d; Simões & Camponez, 2020; Simões, 2021).

Recognizing the exercise of journalistic activity as an ethical and deontological symbol of combating censorship (Camponez, 2018; Simões & Camponez, 2020), we depart from 31 semi-structured in-depth interviews with women journalists from the main Portuguese media (print, television, digital, news agencies and freelancers) to explore the adaptation of Portuguese journalism to the successive decadent transformations of digital culture. Using the descriptive thematic analysis approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017), this article is guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: Which direction has been privileged by Portuguese journalistic activity regarding the new censorship mechanisms of the digital era?

RQ2: Does the privileged direction potentiate the heteroregulation of digital public spaces?

### 2. Hate pandemics in the digital arena

The emergence of digital platforms is indelibly associated with the formulation of high expectations regarding the renewal of deliberative practices. Supposedly, the expansion of access to content production and distribution practices through farreaching communication tools would enable the strengthening of democratic indices (Carpentier et al., 2013; Jenkins & Carpentier, 2013). However, we have seen the structural contradictions of these technology-mediated public spaces minimized with the centralization of two axes of analysis: benefits versus harms (Chun, 2016; Massanari, 2014). They generally focused on general patterns at a macro-structural level, rather than analyzing and providing the details of experience in such places, to understand how expectations and behaviors transferred to digital environments harbor in themselves broader structures and prior historical processes (Deuze, 2006; Domingo, Quandt, Heinonen, Paulussen, Singer & Vujnovic, 2008).

Currently, digital environments are recognized as being incompatible with the democratic value idealized for the concept of full participatory culture (Carpentier et al., 2013; Jenkins & Carpentier, 2013; Wright et al., 2020). This democratic utopia was first demonstrated with a deconstruction of the complexity of participatory and interactive processes in close relation to cultural and political dimensions (Boyd, 2014; Moon, 2018). In participatory media spaces, the acts of responding to the news cycle or that of participating in public space debates began to demonstrate a growth in violence headed by hate speech, often in the recoil of humour, against journalists, news sources, topics, minority groups, and others (Carlsson & Nilsson, 2016; Gardiner, 2018; Milioni et al., 2012; Nielsen, 2014; Reader, 2012; Simões, 2021; Topinka, 2018; Wright et al., 2020).

On the other hand, digital violence tends to be disproportionately directed against the female gender (Amaral & Simões, 2021; Costa, 2020, 2021a, 2021b; Simões et al., 2021; Sundén & Paasonen, 2018), being particularly visible with women of public visibility. The perpetuation of a cycle of violence against the female universe has direct social consequences on the victims and are related to the inhibiting effects on women's participation in the public space and the impediment of achieving justice and gender equality. Regarding the framing of the problematic with women journalists and the identification of the consequences for the journalistic field, it has been identified that the more frequent the assaults are, the most likely it is that journalists become psychologically debilitated and have a dark view of the public, devalue the interaction, normalize violence, limit their exposure, and selfcensure (Adams, 2018; Chen, Pain, Y Chen, Mekelburg, Springer & Troger, 2020; Koirala, 2020; Lewis, Zamith & Coddington, 2020; North, 2016).

#### 3. Incorporating incivility into journalistic flows

Until the upgrade of the digital communication environment to service 2.0, the lack of opportunities for readers to introduce issues in the public space was a

reality. Participation was limited to readers sending letters to editors and directors of newspapers (Reader, 2012; Silva, 2008, 2011, 2014). Targeted by a strong journalistic management, the received letters were selected, scrutinized, edited in terms of length and grammar and, therefore, "reflected more what journalists wanted than what the writing public wished" (Reader, 2012: 495).

The paradigm shift occurred with the increased accessibility of individuals to integrate the various digital public spaces, with the emergence of user-generated content for commenting, and with the support of media to incorporate social debates, dialogues, and deliberations through comment boxes (Carlsson & Nilsson, 2016). The weakening of journalism's monopoly on public debate has, thus, enabled new complex processes to emerge because much of engagement was no longer subject to the direct intervention of editors' pre-selection (Reader, 2012). A participation that, as it does not always fit the standardized journalistic norms and criteria, ends up being perceived as a problem, instead of a benefit or an opportunity to be explored by newsrooms (Domingo, 2008).

The act of commenting in comment boxes hosted by the media represents one of the main elements of online participatory culture (Milioni et al., 2012; Nielsen, 2014; Topinka, 2018; Wright et al., 2020). On the one hand, it is identified that participants tend to take the same position and most comments do not address journalistic issues (Milioni et al., 2012); on the other hand, journalists' engagement to provide a more detailed understanding of stories to their audiences through substantive comments, has decreased (Finley, 2015; Pritchard, 2016a, 2016b; Wright et al., 2020).

Such reality is supported by the exponential increase in comments, editorial changes, but mostly because hate speech promotes a view of audience participation with journalists as invaluable and having poor benefits for news content (Nielsen, 2014). While comments can provide both economic benefits, with metadata attracting more advertising revenue, and journalistic benefits, moderating comments is a significant expense that not all media outlets can afford (Wright et al., 2020). Furthermore, poor moderation or lack of it can also contribute to the degradation of journalistic quality and participation spaces (Pritchard, 2016a, 2016b). In this sense, incivility has led many organizations to shut down these participation spaces temporarily or permanently from their websites (Finley, 2015), except on social networks.

Since hate speech and the various forms of violence are the face of the new censoring mechanisms of digital age, as individuals and interest groups seek to condition and silence digital public spaces (Costa, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c), journalism has the ethical and deontological duty to combat censorship and the responsibility to monitor the successive transformations of digital culture (Camponez, 2018; Simões & Camponez, 2020). Although the strengthening and the search for new regulation models adjusted to the digital age are considered instruments to give credibility to the journalistic class and protect the public space from the heteroregulation temptations by public regulatory institutions or political powers, if journalism self-regulation does not operate, the growth of heteroregulation initiatives and, at the same time, information chaos increases (Camponez, 2018; Simões & Camponez, 2020).

### 4. Framing the Portuguese environment

In Portugal, along with television as the preferred news source, Facebook is the most used digital platform as a source of knowledge, news content, and the most popular form of public participation, namely in the comment boxes of social media networks (ERC, 2014; Reuters Institute, 2020: 79). When compared to international studies, the Portuguese are among those who make more comments on the news flow in digital platforms (ERC, 2014: 10-11).

The general context of Portuguese communication regulation is constituted by a model with different bodies, whose disarticulations and conceptual divergences and understanding about their responsibilities and competences are exacerbated in the successive changes of the Journalist Statute. Therefore, the conjuncture is marked by vagueness, overlapping powers and alienations about the jurisdictions assigned to self-regulation models (Miranda & Camponez, 2017).

To this overlapping of authorities is added a need to solve mismatches in legislation regarding the definition of Media Bodies, which allows proclaiming excuse of editorial responsibility over violent comments in social networks, even if raised by journalistic content, since digital platforms are proclaimed as external to the medium itself, as non-native platforms (Simões & Camponez, 2020). In this sense, it is expected that regulatory institutions and Portuguese media have many difficulties in managing virtual spaces for readers' comments.

"What may really be changing is the power of the regulators, which is being strengthened. This course will be inevitable if the media do not take the necessary measures to safeguard the quality of debates in their commentary spaces, often used as "audience baiting" in the service of the market" (Simões & Camponez, 2020: 43)

The Portuguese press freedom index has improved consecutively, considering the criteria assessed by Reporters Without Borders since 2015, when it ranked 26th, and is currently in 9th place (RSF, 2021). However, the unfolding political landscape during the Covid-19 Pandemic has permeated, from supposed measures to contain the spread of Sars-CoV-2 virus, the degradation of press freedom. The restriction of access to information and inside some political conferences joined some previous indications that already foreshadowed changes to the free exercise of journalistic activity in Portugal, such as the Public Ministry having ordered the surveillance of two journalists who were investigating an alleged corruption process of Sport Lisboa e Benfica soccer club, to assess the journalists' sources of information (RSF, 2021).

More recently, violence in the form of insults and threats against journalists has increased, mainly in protests by far right and denialist movements against the measures imposed by the government in the epidemiological struggle (Costa, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c, 2021d; RSF, 2021). On the other hand, the new General Data Protection Regulation has accentuated the blocking of journalists from exercising their right to access administrative information of the Public Administration (Campos, 2021; Santa-Bárbara, 2021).

In the panorama of media organizations, the repeated lack of working conditions to carry out the only investigative journalism program with weekly periodicity

in Portugal, forces the exit of Sandra Felgueiras, coordinator and journalist, and, after her statement, the Information Department of the public television station decides to immediately extinguish the format, even with several important ongoing investigations (DN, 2021). In turn, we witness an unprecedented principle in journalism, with the "unpublication" of an opinion article written by a doctor against the Covid-19 vaccination of children, published in the digital version of one of Portugal's main reference newspapers. The justification of the editorial direction, with "the contemptuous and superfluous tone used by the author in relation to several personalities of our public life" (Correio da Manhã, 2021), generates a civil society movement arguing censorship *a posteriori* and gives rise to a "Manifesto for Freedom of Expression", which gathers a set of personalities from the most diverse intellectual and ideological backgrounds (TVI, 2021). This initiative results to discredit one of the main signatories, Raquel Varela, who is a historian, critical researcher, and public intellectual of international recognition (Pinto, 2021).

In this framework, there is the formulation of the "Portuguese Human Rights Charter in the Digital Age", published in the form of legislation, to define the first attempt of the regulatory approach in the digital environment, where the Portuguese State has assigned powers, in article 6, to a public entity, namely the Regulatory Authority for the Media, to determine which digital contents are worthy of "sanctioning regimes", under the "Right of protection against disinformation". In the same stipulation, the creation of fact-checking structures by media organizations is promoted (Diário da República, 2021). Consequently, Portugal falls three parameters in the "Global Report on the State of Democracy", becoming the only country in Western Europe with such a significant regression in the quality of democracy towards authoritarianism (Santos, 2021).

## 5. Methodological approaches

#### 5.1. Research goals

Recognizing the exercise of journalistic activity as an ethical and deontological symbol to combat censorship (Camponez, 2018; Simões & Camponez, 2020), which now incorporates and accompanies the evolution of the potentialities of digital tools, namely on the female universe (Costa, 2020, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c), we depart from 31 semi-structured in-depth interviews, a method of data production, with women journalists from the main Portuguese media (press, television, digital, news agencies and freelancers) to explore a poorly documented social issue (Baker, 2004; Charmaz, 2006; Lavrakas, 2008; Miller & Glassner, 2004; Saldaña, 2009): the adaptation of Portuguese journalism to the successive decadent transformations of digital culture. Using the descriptive qualitative approach of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Nowell et al., 2017), this article is guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: Which direction has been privileged by Portuguese journalistic activity regarding the new censorship mechanisms of the digital era?

RQ2: Does the privileged direction potentiate the heteroregulation of digital public spaces?

## 5.2. Methodological trajectories

A qualitative methodological research based on semi-structured in-depth interviews was preferred, since, besides representing one of the most traditional forms of data production, it allows the researcher to be guided according to the script, theme sensitivity and interaction strategies. It is possible to obtain answers to the same questions from all interviewees and, simultaneously, explore the information and experiences while adaptating to the peculiarities of each interviewee (Baker, 2004; Charmaz, 2006; Lavrakas, 2008; Miller & Glassner, 2004; Saldaña, 2009) - see "Appendix A" for the questions used with the participants.

As a contextually situated symbolic interaction, the interview allows, through the exploration of interviewees' views around issues (emergent narratives) in an open, authentic, and truthful way, access to internal knowledge structures (individual beliefs, attitudes, and meanings) attributed to experiences and, particularly, to the social world - the external dimension (Baker, 2004; Holstein & Gubrium, 2004; Miller & Glassner, 2004: 126).

In this direction and while defining the methodological strategy, we identified that thematic analysis has been presented as an independent qualitative descriptive approach, given that it permits "identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes)" in the data under analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 79), from the following six steps (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Nowell et al., 2017):

- 1. Familiarization of data, after its transcription, along with the field notes (pertinent observations, stories, narratives, professional practices, among others), to understand the depth and breadth of content (meanings and patterns).
- 2. Localization and identification of the main codes named or implied in the facts, giving rise to several central themes.
- 3. Classification and comparison of all relevant coded data, so that, from the discursive activities, the main and secondary categorizations allow themes to be identified.
- 4. Review of the elaborated set of themes, to assess whether the coded data extracts form a pattern consistent with each theme.
- 5. Defining and naming themes. Examination of how the interviewees constructed the statements, produced definitions, and managed their participation to analyze, organize, and relate the overall themes and concepts.
- 6. Analytical production can contemplate putting together data extracts, research questions, and/or scholarly literature.

The contacts were established, indiscriminately and impartially, between December 15, 2020, and February 15, 2021, through professional emails available in the professional social network LinkedIn, with Portuguese women journalists

working for the main national generalist media (press, television, digital, news agencies and freelancers). The correspondence explained the research objectives, the procedures for conducting the interviews, and the guarantee of confidentiality. A total of 180 invitations were sent, from which 48 positive and negative responses (26.7%) were obtained. Out of this set, 132 did not give any response (73.3%), corresponding to an acceptance rate of 17.2%, in line with what had been observed in other studies (Chen et al., 2020; Koirala, 2020; Lewis et al., 2020).

The 31 interviews were conducted between January 12 and February 19, 2021, with an average duration of one hour, from the Zoom platform. As shown in Table 1, twenty-two media were represented, with television being the predominant medium, with 12 journalists from 6 media outlets, followed by the press with 9 professionals from 5 media outlets.

| TELEVISION                  | PRESS       | DIGITAL     | NEWS<br>AGENCIES | INTERNATIONAL<br>MEDIA AND<br>FREELANCERS |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 6                           | 5           | 3           | 2                | 6                                         |
| media                       | media       | media       | media            | media                                     |
| 12                          | 9           | 4           | 2                | 4                                         |
| journalists                 | journalists | journalists | journalists      | journalists                               |
| 31 journalists and 22 media |             |             |                  |                                           |

 Table 1 Profile of the media represented (Elaborated by the author)

We found that 38.7% of the participants (12 journalists) write for several news sections, which demonstrates the versatility and the increased workload required for journalists today (see Table 2). The average profile of the journalists interviewed is young, white, middle-class, educated, childless, and multiplatform. In the age distribution, the modal age group comprises the period of 26 to 35 years (58.1%) and thus the average age is close to 35 years (34.5). Finally, more than a third of the interviewees (38.7%) entered journalism 11 years ago, which demonstrates a certain longevity of the professional career.

 Table 2 News sections represented (Elaborated by the author)

| Journalistic section | Number of journalists |  |
|----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Celebrities          | 1                     |  |
| Crime                | 1                     |  |
| Culture              | 1                     |  |
| Economics            | 1                     |  |
| International        | 1                     |  |
| Politics             | 3                     |  |
| Research             | 1                     |  |
| Society              | 5                     |  |
| Sports               | 5                     |  |
| Various              | 12                    |  |
| 10+ departments      | 31 women journalists  |  |

### 6. Results and discussion

Media comment boxes on social networks are *per se* spaces for animosities, offenses, insults, hate speech, and the perpetuation of discriminatory, homophobic, and xenophobic acts. There is a tendency for various forms of violence to coexist, not necessarily directed at professionals. The most common forms of violence perpetrated against Portuguese journalists, inside and outside the participatory spaces hosted by the media, are verbal aggression, hate speech, intimidation, and sexual harassment and assault. On the other hand, there is also a very strong violence from political actors who try to condition the freedom of the Portuguese press, ending up legitimizing and promoting hostility from other individuals on digital platforms.

It has even happened to me with members of parliament (...) E25, 9/02/2021

Members of António Costa's government didn't like it and called my editor because the post (...) E15, 30/01/2021

I received insults from a PCP councilman on my Facebook (...) E23, 6/02/2021

There are several discursive patterns that show the insensitivity of journalists to the most common forms of violence (hate speech and insult). The absence of action by journalists when they are assaulted is due to the lack of support from media organizations, which adopt within the newsroom's rhetoric of devaluation and normalization of violence as a symbol of good work. Consequently, this culture of non-response and inaction of the media about the violence committed against their professionals ends up being framed, in the same way, in relation to the comment spaces on digital platforms, going against the ethical and deontological foundations that govern the journalistic activity. The rhetoric of devaluation also shapes the perceptions of journalists in the way they should deal with the problem and (not) act in public digital spaces.

There is this advice for all of us to do this: ignore the comment boxes. E11, 29/01/2021

We are more interested in statistics, seeing the number of views we have and comment entries, than we are in comments. E20, 4/02/2021

This is something we hear a lot: "It's part of it"; "It'll happen more often!"; "It's because you're doing your job well! E03, 22/01/2021

The orientation of inaction, both towards violence in participatory media spaces and against journalists, corresponds to an unprecedented bias of the profession around numbers (views, interactions, and comments). If there had been a self-regulation of the profession to monitor and moderate audience participation through the promotion of media literacy, and avoid the invasive temptations of political power, a model of heteroregulation on the digital public space would not have been implemented at a time when Portugal is witnessing a complete degradation of its democratic indices.

It would be up to the information directors, Regulatory Entity for the Media, Presidency of the Republic, and all agents that have the obligation to defend the freedom of press to act in unison. Where are they? Sometimes they talk nicely, but daily we don't see a firm position that dissuades. E31, 4/05/2021

I think the measure already exists, but I don't know if it's enough: the monitoring of comments. I think there must be a filter, and I don't think filtering comments is an attack on free speech. E07, 25/01/2021

It would already be a good start to discuss these problems within the journalistic class (...) Discussing, raising awareness, and transmitting the human side of the issue are important steps to take. Media literacy in society is central today. E28, 12/02/2021

Ideally, people should be informed and educated, to realize that when they say certain things, they are assaulting others. I think there are people who probably don't even realize that. I don't think it's an easy problem to solve in a society that values freedom of speech. Whenever we ban something, we may be opening the door for others to be banned. E30, 19/02/2021

I think it comes through public awareness. We really must stop and explain to people that the journalist is performing a function. And the journalist in a role is not giving an opinion. Sometimes these concepts get confused a lot. At the level of behavior in the media, one or another joke may not go down well and be interpreted in a way that doesn't make any sense. So, maybe someone who is the target of hate will not feel comfortable to come to the newsroom and tell it. Why? Because the position you also have on the other side doesn't make the person comfortable to do that. E18, 3/02/2021

In short, a greater awareness for those who are online that actions have a consequence; a stronger regulator; the legislation must be clear on that, the fact that you are committing a crime; there are consequences; the media side also must exist and do their part of the job; and not look the other way when you are threatened, harassed, and insulted. E17, 2/02/2021

### 7. Concluding considerations

Collaborative production, digital interaction and comment boxes have exponentiated the possibilities of civic participation in digital environments, but have also increased, in equal proportions, toxicity and conflictuality, which have quickly transitioned into more hostile forms of incivility. In this framework, the media system has suffered a degradation of journalistic values and, therefore, does not know how to respond to the new challenge of managing public participation; additionally, it cannot identify this instance as an opportunity for the credibility of the class.

The erosion of the boundaries of freedom of expression in the digital public space has led the Portuguese journalist to learn to work in full communion with the violence that circulates online, but also with the outbursts of aggression they are targets of. This devaluation and normalization of violence, together with the inoperability of self-regulation of media and journalists, enhance the materialization of the invasive heteroregulation temptations by the Portuguese political power.

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# NEMINOVNOST HETEROREGULACIJE DIGITALNOG JAVNOG PROSTORA: UOKVIRIVANJE PORTUGALSKOG

Apstrakt. Očekivanja i ponašanja preneta u digitalna okruženja nose šire strukture i istorijske procese koji prethode uspostavljanju same digitalne kulture. Iz tog razloga, akcije pojedinaca u digitalnoj areni predstavljaju različite oblike prisvajanja tehnologije. Digitalne platforme su sada prepoznate kao utopijske jer pojačavaju nove cenzurne mehanizme. Ako, s jedne strane, govor mržnje i različiti oblici nasilja oblikuju novi medijski sistem, s druge strane, dozvoljavaju pojedincima i grupama da pokušaju da uslovljavaju i ućutkaju digitalne javne prostore, posebno ženski univerzum. Novinarska delatnost je oduvek bila prepoznata kao etička i deontološka dužnost u borbi protiv cenzure. Zasnovano na polustrukturiranim dubinskim intervjuima sa 31 portugalskom novinarkom, ovo istraživanje ima za cilj da identifikuje praćenje portugalskih medija na uzastopne dekadentne transformacije digitalne kulture. Koristeći deskriptivni pristup tematske analize, rezultati otkrivaju neoperabilnost samoregulacije medija i novinara. Pristrasnost tradicionalnih vrednosti denuncijacije razvijena je u unutrašnjoj retorici normalizacije nasilja koje trpe novinari, naknadnog zanemarivanja učešća publike i prakse nekih cenzurnih praksi u novinarskim sadržajima. Ovaj scenario je potencirao invazivna iskušenja heteroregulacije od strane političke moći, delegirajući na javnu instituciju nadležnost da utvrđuje koji digitalni sadržaji su vredni "režima sankcionisanja".

Ključne reči: digitalne platforme, nasilno učešće, novinarstvo, regulativni okviri, heteroregulacija.

# Appendix A - Semi-structured in-depth interview guide

- 1. Have you ever been targeted or closely experienced any form of in-person and/or digital violence? Can you tell us about it, please?
- 2. How often did the abusers occur? On which platforms?
- 3. Did you try to identify the authors of these aggressive outbursts?
- 4. How has this experience influenced your professional activity?
- 5. How did this experience affect your personal life?
- 6. Did you take any action after these acts of aggression?
- 7. Did you share these acts of aggression with your superior? And with your colleagues?
- 8. What is your view about audience interaction?
- 9. Is there moderation of online comments in your newsroom? How does your organization view hate speech against journalists?
- 10. Does the growth of hostility, hate speech and misogyny on digital platforms threaten press freedom?
- 11. In your opinion, what measures can be adopted?
- 12. Given the growth of hatred against journalists, have you ever considered changing your profession?