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Indonesia's Moderate Muslim Websites and Their Fight Against Online Islamic Extremism / A'an Suryana

ISEAS Publishing (ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore 2023

36p.

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70 gm.

It is worrying that, in many cases in Indonesia, exposure to the Internet, especially social media, increases knowledge seekers' religious radicalism. This exposure has not only resulted in increased radicalism but also compelled some individuals to turn to violence in the name of Islam.

Moderate online media institutions have not been effective in counteracting the online dissemination of extremist religious content. The content disseminated by radical websites is still being popularly consumed, albeit those moderate Muslim websites have put in considerable effort to counteract radical narratives.

This report argues that this ineffectiveness is due to structural and cultural challenges. The structural challenges include limited funding and sensitivity towards the policy of umbrella organizations. Cultural challenges include passiveness in corporate culture, alongside the "ivory tower" traditions among journalists which leaves them out of touch with Muslim communities.

The government of Indonesia can assist moderate Muslim media websites in fighting radical narratives, for example, through better funding to them.

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The Morning After: A Guide to Media Reporting and Prevention of Suicide in Nigeria / Olufemi Oluwatayo & Martins Ifijeh

Prima (Narrative Landscape Press), Nigeria 2020

xiv, 138p.

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In the world in which many of us grew up, any report of a medical doctor jumping headlong into the lagoon would be attributed to the diabolical acts of some witches and wizards. Today, Nigerians are aware that otherwise normal people, including successful professionals, could nurse a feeling of emptiness and despair that ultimately triggers suicide. But at a time concerted efforts were needed to address the challenge, reporting such tragedies tends to either glamourize or stigmatize what ordinarily are mental health issues. It is against the foregoing background that I commend 'The Morning After A Guide for Media Reporting and Prevention of Suicide in Nigeria', a very insightful book that deals with how to handle a major health problem hardly ever discussed in Nigeria. With chilling statistics and anecdotal references, what Olufemi Oluwatayo and Martins Ifijeh are telling us is that since not all wounds are visible, we do not always know what people around us are going through or what action they might take when pushed to the edge. For that reason, they argue, there is an urgent need for sensitivity in the way suicides are reported in Nigeria. They have also proffered solutions on how the silent public health challenge can be prevented in Nigeria. This is a major work that should provoke a serious conversation on how and why many Nigerians are now taking their own lives.

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A Reporter and His Beat / Yinka Fabowale

Floy Publications, Nigeria 2022

xx, 272p.

Includes Index

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400 gm.

This book provides a comprehensive insight of a reporter on the beat in Africa's greatest country, Nigeria. Apart from surveying the trends and dynamics of journalism training and practice, media ecologies, ethos and traditions over time, it also reflects the sociology of the Nigerian media. In it, Yinka Fabowale, one of Nigeria's most accomplished and award-winning journalists, vividly paints the picture of the diverse experiences and challenges the African journalist faces as he rises from the level of a rookie to the zenith of his career. From detailed accounts of his rigorous but very rewarding practical apprenticeship under some hardcore, no-nonsense professionals; the daily risks and thrills of being a journalist, the dangers of cooptation, compromise and corruption and lessons he learnt from both highly and lowly placed news sources and the events he covered spanning different eras of military and democratic regimes, the author points out the similarity and disparity between theory and practice and offers unique and realistic lessons to reporters, journalists and scholars. It also mirrors developments and stagnation at diverse levels of analysis of the state of Nigerian journalism and the society - from the personal to the sectoral to the regional and national. It relives the realities regarding journalism education, professionalism, ethics, gate-keeping functions and watch-dog mandate of the press, in addition to policy misses by government as well as dysfunctional politics among other factors hindering national development, and thereby holds up a mirror for the nation's Fourth Estate and society's self-assessment and the need to refocus on ideals. This makes the book an invaluable practical tool and resource material for policy makers, practitioners and students of communication and media studies, sociology, history, political science and any reader interested in the wide range of subjects it covers. The book's uniqueness lies in its excellent narrative and creative approach to teaching journalism. The chapters are short but focus intensely on the subject, just as the themes overlap and inter-relate. The content is rendered in simple, lucid and light-hearted language, laced with humour and wit that makes it reader-friendly.

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