SEARCH Journal of Media and Communication Research (SEARCH)

Vol 18 No 5 2026
Special Issue: 5th International Conference on Media Studies (ICMS25)

Taylor's University Sdn. Bhd.

- This page is intentionally left blank -

SEARCH Journal of Media and Communication Research (SEARCH)

ABOUT THE JOURNAL

Aims & Scope

The aim of the *SEARCH Journal of Media and Communication Research* is to promote and enhance research development and debates in the field of media and communication research. It also serves as a forum for researchers and industry players who use research as the frame for social awareness and change. We welcome any submission of manuscripts throughout the year. Authors are invited to submit scholarly works on communication such as International Relations, Media Management, Film and Media Arts, Digital Education and Communities, Communication and Policies, Globalization and Social Impact, Youth and Media, Audience and Perception Analysis, Democracy and Integration, Media Literacy and Education, Media and Development, Health Communication, Politics, Hegemony and the Media, Gender and Sexuality, Social Media and Subcultures, Popular Culture and Society, Media and Religion, Media and Identity, War/Peace Journalism, Conflict and Crisis Communication, Strategic Communication and Information Management, Digital Media, Advertising and Persuasive Management, Public Relations and Crisis Management, Global Journalism and relevant areas from the standpoint of media and communication research.

EDITORIAL BOARD

EDITORS-IN-CHIEF
Professor Dr. Adrian Lee Yuen Beng, Taylor's University, Malaysia
Dr. Nur Haniz Mohd Nor, Taylor's University, Malaysia

EDITORIAL LEAD, SEARCH Special Issue (ICMS25)
Dr. Nurul Lina Mohd Nor, Taylor's University, Malaysia

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Dr. Nurul Wahidah Mahmud Zuhudi, Taylor's University, Malaysia
Dr. Irfan Hameed, Taylor's University, Malaysia
Dr. Ong Ai Ling, Taylor's University, Malaysia
Dr. Jacqui Kong Hui Yi, Taylor's University, Malaysia
Dr. G Manickam Govindaraju, Taylor's University, Malaysia
Dr. Somia Abdul Samee Anam Saeed, Taylor's University, Malaysia
Dr. Ezwan Mokhtar, Taylor's University, Malaysia
Prof Dr. Hassan Raza Syed, University of Sargodha, Pakistan

TECHNICAL EDITORS
Nurun Najah Tarmidzi, Taylor's University, Malaysia
Dr. Zaiamri Zainal Abidin, University of Malaya, Malaysia

Web Editor
Mr. Koh Chee Aik

ADVISORY BOARD

Professor Dato'Sri Dr. Syed Arabi bin Syed Abdullah Idid, International Islamic University, Malaysia
Professor Dr. Arvind Singhal, University of Texas at El Paso, USA
Professor Dr. Ang Peng Hwa, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
Professor Dr. Norshuhada Shiratuddin, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Malaysia
Professor Dr. Terry Flew, Queensland University of Technology, Australia
Professor Dr. Deddy Mulyana, Universitas Padjajaran, Indonesia
Professor Dr. Oliver Hahn, Universiti of Passau, Germany

PUBLISHING SCHEDULE
SEARCH Journal of Media and Communication Research is an online peer-reviewed journal that publishes three times a year in March, July, and November.
Published By: Taylor's University Sdn Bhd (CO.NO.149634/D)
Online ISSN: 2672-7080
Frequency: 3 Issues / Year

ABSTRACTING & INDEXING
We are indexed in SCOPUS, ESCI (Clarivate) and MyCite.



OWNERSHIP & MANAGEMENT
Copyright Policy
Upon acceptance of an article, Authors will be asked to transfer copyright. This transfer will ensure the widest possible dissemination of information. A notification will be sent to the corresponding Author confirming receipt of the manuscript. If excerpts from other copyrighted works are included, the Author(s) must obtain written permission from the copyright owners and credit the source(s) in the article.

Open Access Policy
SEARCH is an open access journal which means that all content is freely available on SEARCH website. Users can read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of the articles in this journal without asking prior permission from the publisher or the authors.

Sponsored By
The journal is sponsored by School of Media and Communication of Faculty of Social Sciences and Leisure Management at Taylor's University.

Published By
Taylor's University Sdn Bhd (CO.NO.149634-D)
**** Printed ISSN: 2229-872X (From Volume 1 till Volume 8)***

FOREWORD

The intelligence era continues to reshape how media is produced, distributed and interpreted requiring innovative perspectives and balance between human and machine interaction. In this special issue of *SEARCH Journal of Media and Communication Research* that is featuring the 5th International Conference on Media Studies (ICMS25) held in October 2025, with the theme *Media Transformation in the Intelligence Era: The Human-Machine Centred Approach*, we include ten papers that showcase how communication is changing in Southeast Asia as a result of technological innovations.

The first article, *Mapping the Research on AI-Generated Content (AIGC) in Social Media*, presents the dynamic growth of AIGC research through more than 1,400 articles in 2024. The research shows both progress and fragmentation of this sphere as the authors rely on selected theories presented in the paper. *From Fandom to Citizenship* examines Indonesia's "Anies Bubble" campaign, showing how meme aesthetics, influencer mediation, and peer circulation transformed electoral messaging into participatory cultural expression. Complementing this, Connectivity and Control demonstrates that internet penetration does not uniformly enhance freedom of expression across ASEAN. Instead, its effects are shaped by national political conditions.

Journalism and its practice is ever evolving. *Digital News Storytelling in Malaysian Newsrooms* reveals how multimedia journalists balance values of accuracy and fairness with the demands of immediacy, visuality, and platform-specific storytelling. The shift reflects transformation in human-approach of audience behaviour that aligns with the theme of the conference. Several articles discuss digital trust, vulnerability, and safety. *Visual Storytelling through Mise en Scène: Investigating Its Impact on Audience Engagement in Social Media Short Films* explores how *mise en scene* functions as a visual storytelling tool on social media platforms contributing to the role of visual aesthetics in audience engagement. *Digital Harassment in Gaming Communication* identifies six forms of cyberbullying and explains how gaming environments generate new modes of harm. Meanwhile, *Brand Credibility in a Social Media Ecosystem* shows how transparency, consistent communication, and visible impact shape donor trust in an increasingly crowded NGO landscape.

A Topic Modelling Analysis of Mental Health Discourse identifies themes of emotional expression, advice-seeking, and resource sharing within Facebook support groups. The study highlights the value of peer-to-peer digital spaces, especially as automated moderation and AI-assisted support tools expand. Environmental communication is represented through *The Role of Environmental NGOs in Communicating E-Waste Awareness* and demonstrates how ENGOs bridge policy and community to promote sustainable practices in rural Malaysia. Finally, *Social Media Sentiment Analysis on Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak's Court Case* explains the use of social media as a platform for political narratives in a post-truth environment. Together, these ten studies demonstrate that while machine intelligence is highly sought, human values

and context for meaning-making remains vital. This special issue invites readers to balance technological advancement with human approach to strengthen ethical and socially grounded media futures.

Guest Editor
Dr Normahfuzah Ahmad
Universiti Utara Malaysia, Malaysia

FOREWORD

It is with great pleasure that we present the *SEARCH Special Issue 2026*, a collection of ten selected scholarly papers published in conjunction with the 5th International Conference on Media Studies (ICMS25), organised by Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM). This special issue marks another meaningful collaboration between *SEARCH Journal of Media and Communication Research* and the academic community, reflecting our shared commitment to advancing scholarship and fostering intellectual exchange in media and communication studies.

The publication of a special issue represents more than the compilation of scholarly works. It is the culmination of a collective academic effort involving authors, reviewers, editors, and institutional partners, united by a commitment to research quality and scholarly integrity. Each manuscript in this issue has undergone a rigorous process of peer review, revision, and editorial evaluation, supported by the editorial teams of *SEARCH* and *ICMS*. Through several stages of assessment and refinement, considerable attention has been devoted to ensuring that the papers meet the scholarly standards and expectations of the journal.

We recognize that meaningful academic contributions emerge not only from the originality of research but also from the critical dialogue, constructive feedback, and intellectual engagement that shape a manuscript throughout the publication process. It is through this collaborative endeavor that research is strengthened, perspectives are refined, and knowledge is made available to a wider scholarly community.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Dr Normahfuzah Ahmad for her dedication and invaluable contribution as Guest Editor. Her thoughtful coordination, commitment, and collaborative spirit have been instrumental in bringing this special issue to fruition. My gratitude also extends to the Institute of Communication and Media Studies (ICMS), Universiti Utara Malaysia, for its valued partnership and support. Equally, I wish to acknowledge the reviewers, authors, and editorial teams whose collective efforts have made this publication possible.

As we present these ten papers to our readers, we hope that this special issue will serve as a meaningful resource for researchers, educators, and practitioners, encouraging further critical inquiry, scholarly discussion, and the exchange of ideas across disciplines and communities.

On behalf of the editorial team of *SEARCH*, it is my pleasure to welcome readers to this *SEARCH Special Issue 2026*. May the contributions presented here continue to inspire new perspectives and advance the pursuit of knowledge in media and communication research.

Editorial Lead, SEARCH Special Issue (ICMS25)
Dr Nurul Lina Mohd Nor
Taylor's University, Malaysia

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mapping the research on AI-generated content in social media: A bibliometric analysis approach *Kai Quan*	1–19
From fandom to citizenship: Digital identity formation and hybrid campaigning in Indonesia's 2024 Election *Syahirul Alim, Abdul Wahid, Sekar Arum Nuswantari, Fariza Yuniar Rakhmawati, Ima Hidayati Utami & Azahar Kasim*	21–37
Digital news storytelling in Malaysian newsrooms: Multimedia journalists'perspectives on cross-platform journalism *Ima Liana Esa, Wan Hartini Wan Zainodin, Fadzillah Aishah Ismail, Nur Farazilla Mohd Arsad & Herryanie Salehin*	39–54
Connectivity and control: ICT growth and the politics of free expression in Southeast Asia's core states *Abdul Aziz Azizam, Wan Norbani Wan Noordin, Azizul Halim Yahya & Ahmad Md Redzuan*	55–72
Digital harassment in gaming communication: Identifying types of cyberbullying among Malaysian gamers *Noor Aziah Abdullah, Muhammad Fakhru Rizuan Che Omar, Mohd Nizam Saad & Nurulhuda Ibrahim*	73–87
Visual storytelling through mise-en-scène: Investigating multidimensional audience engagement in short films on social media *Siti Salwa binti Bahari & Aselawati binti Che Ab Adziz*	89–112
Brand credibility in a social media ecosystem: Building trust between NGOs and donors *Sabrina Mohd Rashid, Norsiah Abdul Hamid, Rohana Mijan & Nurzuraini Mohd Zahri*	113–128
A topic modelling analysis of mental health discourse in a social media platform *Noratikah Nordin, Mohd Halim Mohd Noor, Mohamad Saifudin Mohamad Saleh & Bahiyah Omar*	129–142
The role of environmental NGOs in communicating e-waste awareness to rural communities in Malaysia *Joyce Cheah Lynn-Sze, Mohd Zuwairi bin Mat Saad, Mohd Khairie Ahmad & Marzura Ibrahim*	143–159
Social media sentiment analysis on Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak's court case: A study of public perception in Malaysia *Ismail Sualman & Suffian Hadi Ayub*	161–176

- This page is intentionally left blank -