

The phenomenon of ombudsman to news media is a self-regulation instrument in journalism. In order to gain a picture of the role played by the news ombudsman, the Netherlands Media Ombudsman Foundation (MON), in collaboration with Fontys University of Applied Sciences, Department of Journalism, conducted both national and international studies. These studies revealed that the news ombudsman takes on many different guises at the media, ranging from house critic to PR and marketing officer.

The present study demonstrates that the position of news ombudsmen is under pressure across the globe. In an era of budget cuts, the revolutionary advent of digital media and effortless direct email contact between news consumers and journalists, news ombudsmen make vulnerable targets for cost-conscious managers.

In order to measure the effectiveness of the news ombudsman, this study encompassed three sub-studies into the columns of the Volkskrant ombudsman, the (former) readers' editor of the Rotterdams Dagblad and the NOS ombudsman.

Our findings justify the conclusion that the news ombudsman can represent one of the most practical and efficient forms of journalistic self-regulation, while as such contributing to the reliability and credibility of the news media.



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ISBN 97890 79700 20 2

