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WILAILUCK SANGSUKCHAROEN: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF

PERCEPTION ON PRESS FUNCTIONALISM AND MUTUAL RELATIONSHIP

BETWEEN POLITICIANS AND REPORTERS. THESIS ADVISOR: ASSO. PROF.

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The research findings are a result of responses to survey questions given to two sample groups: one comprising of 120 politicians and the other of 98 political news reporters. It is found that the perception on press functionalism and mutual relationship between politicians and reporters are largely different. Out of a total of 27 itemized perceptions, differences in 20 of them are statistically significant. Examples of these issues are: 1) that the press should perform the function of checking and opposing the government; 2) that most Thai newspapers have freedom but lack responsibility; and 3) that the press should emphasize positive news to promote development rather than presenting negative information of conflicts and disasters. In general, reporter group tends to give more liberal views than politician group.

Regarding the perception on mutual images of politicians and news reporters, it is found that reporters have more negative views of politicians than positive ones. Specifically, the ten negative views are that politicians are rather insincere, selfish, irresponsible, mistake-ridden, virtueless, unjust, apt to be corrupt, aggressive and biased. On the other hand, politicians are more positive not necessary toward the reporters. Only three negative views of the reporters are stated. They include corruption, aggression, and prejudice.

In addition, this research found that sex, age, educational background, experience, and belonging institution of politicians and reporters are factors which result in differences in the perceptions of their roles in news presentation, mutual relationship between the government and the press, freedom and responsibility of the press, and definitions of news.

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