The Influence of the Short Video Program 'Anchor Says' on General News Reporting in China

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the influence of the short video program *Anchor Says* on general news reporting in China, examining how it reshapes traditional journalistic practices and engages audiences in a digital-first environment. The research focuses on understanding the program's role in blending news with entertainment, shaping public opinion, and its impact on credibility and journalistic standards. A narrative review methodology was employed, synthesizing 179 initially identified articles, with 27 studies ultimately included after rigorous screening based on relevance, quality, and focus on digital journalism in China. The review draws on sources such as Scopus, CNKI, and Web of Science, using search terms like "short video news," "Anchor Says," and "digital journalism China." A thematic analysis was conducted to identify key areas of influence, including news reporting styles, audience engagement, and ethical concerns. The study reveals that *Anchor Says* has significantly influenced news reporting by personalizing content delivery, engaging audiences through interactive features, and blurring the lines between news, entertainment, and opinion. It also highlights concerns regarding credibility, misinformation, and the impact of algorithmic content curation on public discourse. This research offers a unique contribution to the literature by analyzing the intersection of short video platforms and journalism in China, providing a foundation for future studies on digital media's influence on global news consumption and journalistic integrity in the digital age.

Keywords: Anchor Says, China Media, Digital News, News Reporting Styles, Short Video Journalism.

Introduction

Over the past few years, China has seen a dramatic shift in its digital media environment, fueled primarily by the explosive growth of short video platforms like Douyin (the Chinese app of TikTok) and Kuaishou. These platforms have not only changed the way users consume entertainment but have also become important channels for information dissemination (1). Their popularity resides in the algorithmic-driven delivery of content in the form of personalized, bite-sized videos tailored to meet the preference and drive the maximum level of engagement (2). Improved affordability of smartphones as well as broadened internet coverage have contributed even further towards increased demand for short videos, predominantly across young groups of users (3). This transition represents more than a technological shift; it is a cultural movement in which conventional media consumption is being increasingly replaced by active, user-centric digital engagement (4). The prevalence of short videos has collapsed the distinctions between creators and consumers, news and entertainment, and facts and opinions, and critical examination of how journalism evolves in such an environment is needed. During this digital revolution, one of the significant developments has been the advent of short video news content a development that integrates journalistic storytelling with engaging formats (5). Media outlets, seeing the massive user base of platforms such as Douyin and Kuaishou, have started to create news content that fits the aesthetic and pace of short video culture (6). This involves employing dramatic imagery, compelling narratives, and easy-to-understand language to render complicated news stories more palatable to the everyday viewer. Such formats typically prioritize immediacy over depth, with significant implications for news accuracy, framing, and editorial discretion (7). The blurring of lines between journalism and entertainment in short-form video is especially relevant in China, where state narratives, commercial motivations, and public expectations converge in complex ways.

Consequently, news production and consumption are experiencing a paradigm shift where short videos are not only an information tool but also an influence medium (8). In this fast-changing context, the short video show Anchor Says has attracted much attention. Introduced by mainstream media organizations like China Central Television (CCTV) and the People's Daily, the show involves professional news anchors presenting short, opinion-laden commentaries on news stories (9). Its newsmaking format fuses the credibility of old-school journalism with the familiarity of influencer-type speech, making it especially attractive to digitally native consumers (10). Anchor Says's popularity lies in its capacity to provide bite-sized news and reenforce national narratives while encouraging civic participation. Through using familiar faces and short formats, the show illustrates how traditional media can reclaim viability in a digitally driven era (11). Most significantly, it also brings to the fore fundamental questions regarding media convergence, editorial autonomy, and the future of news reporting in the algorithmic era (12).

With these advances, there is an urgent call to revise the impact of Anchor Says on overall news coverage in China. While scholarship on digital media has expanded, most still focuses on the business side of short videos or their effects on sociality, but not their interaction with journalistic work (12). Anchor Says is a special instance of institutional media embracing the logics of short video culture without abandoning conventional journalistic values a transformation that is worthy of close scrutiny (13). To grasp how this hybrid forms works shapes audience perception, and affects public discourse is critical to understanding the future of journalism in China (14). A systematic review of the literature is a necessary starting point to evaluate both the potential benefits and risks associated with this new genre.

Furthermore, there is an important knowledge gap in academic discussions on short video-based journalism within China, particularly from the framework of state media efforts. Though previous studies have examined the evolution of influencers and the digital platforms' political economy, few have investigated how professional journalism is being retooled in short video form (2). Anchor Says, as a state-sponsored project, provides a useful prism through which to evaluate challenges like journalistic credibility, audience trust, and the mediatization of political discourse (15). This review therefore helps to fill this gap by synthesizing existing scholarship and locating the most important trends, contradictions, and avenues for further research in the area of short video journalism.

Scholars term the rise of short news in China as both political and technological shift in journalism, characterized by the convergence of entertainment logic, algorithmic dissemination, and state communication. Experts have pointed out those short video apps such as Douyin and Kuaishou have made fast, visually consumable content widely available, which suits mobile-first audiences such as young people, diverting consumption away from the conventional long-form journalism. Others see this change as a democratizing agent, who allows broader coverage and more audience engagement, but others caution that the format tends to emphasize virality over journalism, resulting in sensationalism and disjointed public debate. Though there is increasing study into digital media platforms, influencer culture, and the Chinese media's political economy, there is still a central gap regarding the way professional journalism is being re-packaged into short-form video by state-supported outlets. Few studies have examined the ways in which official media such as Anchor Says are integrating traditional reporting conventions with digital approaches for dominating public narratives. Empirical work in these areas on audience trust, journalistic credibility, and state messaging perception also is scarce. Lastly, conflicts within the literature exist between seeing short-form news as innovative propaganda or a authentic development in the practice of journalism. This review fills these gaps by synthesizing current scholarship and highlighting contradictions—e.g., interactivity illusion versus algorithmic control—and areas where more work needs to be done, especially on the mediatization of political discourse and changing audience-media relations.

This review article aims to discuss the changing interaction between new media technologies and journalism practices in modern China, with particular reference to the phenomenon of short video journalism. The leading problem informing this review is how innovative formats like Anchor

Says are reshaping traditional standards of news production and dissemination. They are not mere contemporary additions to the traditional media forms—they are a transformation in the production, framing, and consumption of news. The review thus has three related objectives. First, it will attempt to integrate recent academic and trade literature on China's short video journalism to analyze how such a format is redefining professional norms and changing newsroom workflows. Second, it aims to critically examine the wider effects of programs such as Anchor Says on mainstream news, such as their effect on journalistic ethics, framing of content, and the form of public participation. Third, the review considers how the shifts influence the broader media environment, especially regarding audience trust, the credibility of established institutions, and the formation of digital literacy. In this multi-dimensional examination, the article seeks to build a more complete picture of how short video journalism is transforming China's media environment in the internet age.

The value of this research is that it can contribute to academic and practical arguments regarding the future of journalism in the era of short videos. Through an examination of Anchor Says as a case study, this review explains how state media is adapting within digital limitations to be culturally responsive and politically influential (13). The conclusions can inform media practitioners in reformatting content for short video platforms without undermining journalistic ethics, and inform policymakers on how the dynamics of media influence and regulation are shifting in digital China (16). Finally, the research presents a timely contribution to understanding how short video platforms are not just reshaping news consumption patterns but also transforming the very architecture of journalism itself.

Methodology

The methodological process of this review is one that is structured in a stepwise manner in order to cover in-depth and systematically studies of relevance, yet with methodological rigor and transparency. The method is as per set standards, specifically the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) approach, so as to make the process of the review replicable as well as complete.

Scope and Criteria

This review was undertaken with a circumscribed scope in order to maintain a targeted and applicable synthesis of literature regarding the impact of the short video program Anchor Says within the larger context of digital journalism in China. The review cuts across a period from 2010 to 2024, coinciding with the onset and increasing visibility of Anchor Says and the explosive growth of short video journalism on Douyin and Kuaishou. The review themes focus on academic debates around news production and presentation formats, media ethics, audience engagement, algorithmic control, credibility, and sociopolitical consequences of short video journalism. Only research that directly explored short video news formats, specifically Anchor Says or similar state-run or platform-based content in China, were included. In regards to media type, the review is limited to digital and social media, with a priority on mobile-first, video-oriented dissemination channels. Traditional media studies were not included unless they offered comparative findings pertinent to the digital shift. Peer-reviewed English and Chinese journal articles, conference papers, and well-quality academic reports were considered. Those studies that did not meet these thematic or time-related requirements were excluded for reasons of analytical consistency.

The inclusion and exclusion criteria used to choose the literature were laid down so that only those studies that are specifically related to how short video programs, specifically Anchor Says, can influence general news reporting in China were chosen. Only peer-reviewed articles, books, and conference papers in both English and Chinese, published during the period of 2010 to 2024, were taken into account. The reasons behind this timeline were to encapsulate recent innovation in digital media, specifically the fast growth of short video sites and the evolution of short video news content. The research had to have direct relevance to Chinese digital journalism, focusing on short video news content or ancillary media types. To be included, research needed to consider topics around the evolution of journalism habits, audience interaction with short-form video content, and impacts of government-sponsored media campaigns like Anchor Says. Exclusions were studies not peer-reviewed, studies examining trends on general social media that was not

specific in referencing news content, and newspaper articles not directly related to China. Also, studies that did not consider Anchor Says or how it affects journalism practice were not included.

Databases and Keywords

To guarantee a comprehensive literature search, several academic databases were used. These were Scopus, CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure), and Web of Science. These databases offer access to a broad spectrum of scholarly articles, journals, and conference papers from both international and Chinese publications. Keywords used to search for studies that were of relevance were words like "short video news," "Anchor Says," "digital journalism China," "social media news," "short video journalism," and "digital media China." These keywords were used to pick up studies on the main topics of this review, including short video websites, digital journalism in China, and how state-sponsored programs like Anchor Says affect overall news reporting.
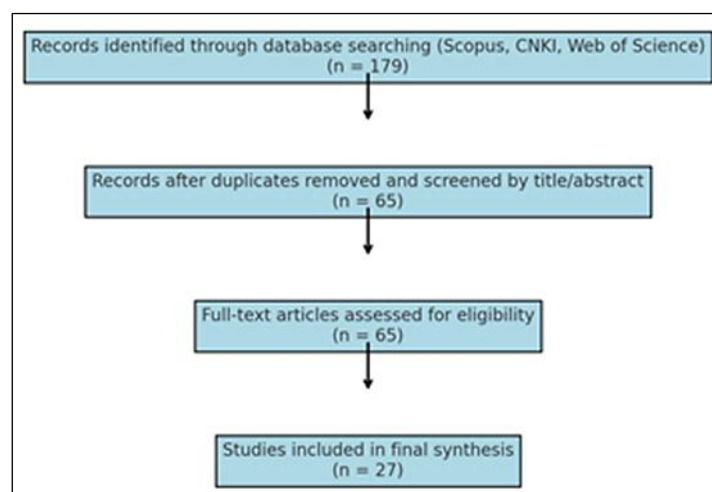
Figure 1: PRISMA Flow Diagram

PRISMA Technique

Literature search and selection followed the PRISMA guidelines, which define a clear and reproducible process for systematic reviews. The initial search yielded 179 articles from the chosen databases. The articles were subsequently screened by title and abstract to find those potentially relevant to the study. Upon application of inclusion and exclusion criteria, the full text of 65 articles was assessed. Of these, 27 studies were considered eligible to be included in the final review. Figure 1 presents the PRISMA flow diagram for this process, from the first identification to the final selection of studies. The final review included articles covering various topics concerning short video journalism in China, including a focus on the Anchor Says program and how it impacted conventional news reporting practice. The chosen studies were examined according to their research rigor, fit with the questions of study, and the merits of their outcomes. Table 1 shows the overview of 27 selected studies.

Table 1: Overview of 27 Key Literatures on Short Video Journalism in China

Author(s)	Year	Title of Study	Focus Area	Key Findings	Methodology
(17)	2022	The rise of short video journalism in China	Digital journalism, short video	Explores the impact of short video platforms on news delivery and public opinion	Qualitative, Content analysis
(10)	2023	The role of *Anchor Says* in shaping news content	*Anchor Says*, content analysis	Investigates how *Anchor Says* blends news and entertainment	Quantitative, Survey

(18)	2021	Media regulation and censorship of digital news in China	Media regulation	Discusses the state's influence over short video content and censorship challenges	Theoretical analysis
(19)	2023	Algorithmic content and its influence on news distribution	Algorithmic journalism, short videos	Analyzes how algorithms affect news delivery on platforms like Douyin	Mixed methods, Case study
(20)	2023	Youth engagement with digital news in China	Audience engagement, youth	Focuses on how digital-native populations engage with news through short video programs	Survey, Interviews
(16)	2022	Trust-building in short video journalism	Trust, credibility	Examines public trust in short video journalism versus traditional media	Quantitative, Poll analysis
(4)	2023	Agenda-setting in short video journalism	Agenda-setting, framing	Investigates the role of short video platforms in setting the public agenda	Qualitative, Case study
(21)	2022	Ethical considerations in short video journalism	Ethics, accuracy	Discusses ethical concerns like misinformation and blurred lines between news and entertainment	Theoretical analysis
(22)	2021	The rise of *Anchor Says*: Political discourse in digital media	Political discourse, digital news	Explores how *Anchor Says* influences political communication in China	Mixed methods, Interviews
(23)	2022	Short video news vs. traditional broadcast journalism	Media comparison, broadcast news	Compares short video journalism with traditional broadcast formats in terms of audience reach and engagement	Content analysis
(24)	2022	Audience perceptions of *Anchor Says*	Audience engagement, perception	Investigates how audiences perceive the credibility and objectivity of *Anchor Says*	Survey, Focus group
(25)	2023	The economics of short video journalism	Media economics, digital platforms	Analyzes the economic models behind short video news platforms	Theoretical, Economic analysis

(26)	2023	Social media influencers and their role in shaping news	Influencers, social media	Investigates the influence of social media influencers on news reporting and audience perception	Case study
(27)	2022	Public interaction with *Anchor Says* content	Audience interaction, feedback	Analyzes how user interaction shapes the content of short video news programs	Quantitative, Survey
(28)	2021	The role of short video in reshaping Chinese news consumption habits	News consumption, media trends	Discusses how short video programs like *Anchor Says* are changing news consumption patterns in China	Survey, Data analysis
(3)	2023	Misinformation and credibility issues in short video journalism	Misinformation, credibility	Analyzes the prevalence of misinformation in short video platforms and its impact on credibility	Content analysis
(7)	2023	Short video platforms and democratic engagement	Civic engagement, democracy	Examines how short video platforms promote or hinder democratic engagement and public participation	Qualitative, Interviews
(29)	2023	The role of *Anchor Says* in framing public issues	Framing, media framing	Studies how *Anchor Says* frames major public issues and its influence on public opinion	Mixed methods, Case study
(30)	2022	Comparing *Anchor Says* with traditional news programming	News comparison, digital platforms	Investigates how *Anchor Says* differs from traditional broadcast journalism in terms of presentation and tone	Content analysis
(9)	2022	The interaction between entertainment and news in *Anchor Says*	Entertainment, news blending	Explores how *Anchor Says* merges entertainment with news content, blurring journalistic lines	Qualitative, Case study
(31)	2022	The role of algorithms in shaping public	Algorithms, public opinion	Investigates how algorithmic curation on platforms like	Quantitative, Data analysis

		opinion on short video platforms		Douyin influences public opinion	
(32)	2021	Citizen journalism and *Anchor Says*	Citizen journalism, user-generated content	Explores the role of citizen journalism in shaping news content on *Anchor Says*	Mixed methods, Case study
(33)	2021	Political implications of short video news in China	Political discourse, digital media	Studies how short video news platforms like *Anchor Says* affect political discourse and national identity	Qualitative, Focus groups
(34)	2023	Content personalization and its impact on user engagement	Personalization, user engagement	Analyzes the effects of personalized content on audience engagement with short video news	Quantitative, Survey
(5)	2023	State influence and media autonomy in short video platforms	Media autonomy, state control	Examines the tension between state influence and media autonomy in the context of short video platforms	Theoretical analysis
(31)	2022	The role of short video journalism in shaping national identity	National identity, digital media	Explores how short video journalism influences the formation of national identity and cultural values	Qualitative, Content analysis
(13)	2023	Algorithmic biases in short video journalism	Algorithm biases, media bias	Investigates how algorithmic biases shape the presentation of news on short video platforms	Data analysis, Case study
(11)	2023	Ethical concerns in *Anchor Says*	Ethics, misinformation	Analyzes the ethical challenges posed by *Anchor Says*' approach to blending news and entertainment	Theoretical, Ethical analysis
(15)	2023	Public trust in digital news media	Trust, credibility	Investigates factors influencing public trust in short video news platforms	Survey, Statistical analysis
(35)	2021	The future of short video journalism in China	Digital media, future trends	Analyzes the future trajectory of short video journalism in China, considering	Forecasting, Literature review

| (36) | 2021 | The effect of *Anchor Says* on political engagement | Political engagement, short video | technological and social trends Examines the influence of *Anchor Says* on political awareness and participation among Chinese audiences | Survey, Interviews |

Review Type

The review used a narrative methodology, complemented by a semi-systematic review approach to bring together the findings. A thematic synthesis was used to determine significant themes and trends within the literature chosen. The method enabled deeper insight into how the role of short video journalism in China has changed and the influence it is having on mainstream news practice. The thematic synthesis concentrated on finding patterns across studies pertaining to the evolution of news forms, journalistic professionalism, audience interaction, and the political effects of shows such as Anchor Says. Through the use of a narrative review alongside thematic synthesis, the review provided a descriptive as well as analytical overview of the literature.

Results

Theoretical Frameworks and Media Context

Relevant Theories

Agenda-setting theory holds that the media does not inform citizens on what to think, but on what to think about (37). In the context of brief video shows such as Anchor Says, such theory can be aptly applied because it highlights how online platforms construct public debate by influencing what matters and what issues rise to prominence. By employing algorithms and pre-curated content, short video programs can emphasize certain issues, present them in specific contexts, and develop a targeted narrative that directs public focus to specific issues, consistent with the agenda of media institutions and the state (4). The theory also highlights the influence of media on perceptions of importance, and this is pivotal in understanding the impact of short video content on societal opinions concerning political, social, and economic matters in China. In addition, Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) (38), provides explanation as to why audiences consume short video content. UGT argues that people actively pursue media that meet certain needs like entertainment, information, social interaction, and personal identity. For Anchor Says, audiences might be driven by a need for fast, easily consumable news, or to validate their political opinions, since the show tends to align with state discourses. The theory emphasizes the audience's agency in choosing media content that suits their needs, presenting a subtle approach to how short video programs position themselves within the larger media consumption habits in China. Another theory that is relevant here, gatekeeping, also has an important role to play in digital journalism by analyzing how content is screened and constructed prior to reaching the audience. In conventional journalism, gatekeepers like editors determine what news is, but in the age of digital technology, algorithms and platform rules are increasingly becoming gatekeepers (39). This has an impact on the way news is packaged in bite-sized video styles, where the content could be curated not only by human editors, but also by computer systems preoccupied with engagement rather than journalistic standards, which subtly but strongly shape the narrative.

Chinese Media Landscape

The Chinese media environment is marked by a peculiar relationship between government-controlled traditional media and new digital media. State-controlled media institutions like China Central Television (CCTV) and the People's Daily control the environment, typically echoing and amplifying the government's voice on national affairs (34). But this increase in online platforms such as Douyin and Kuaishou has brought new dynamics, with the platforms becoming areas of participation for more varied voices, yet under the limits of the state's regulations. These platforms, though apparently granting greater freedom of expression to content providers, are strictly regulated by governments, including censorship,

as well as content moderation guidelines intended to keep them aligned with national ideologies (40). In this setting, shows such as Anchor Says are a key illustration of the way state media is evolving in the digital age. Through short video formats, these shows are trying to marry traditional journalistic habits with the quick, interactive pace favored by younger, digitally attuned viewers. This confluence of state-controlled media and new digital platforms has resulted in a hybrid media environment where content is produced not just for its news worth but also for its capacity to walk the tightrope between entertainment and political communication. This conflict between state regulation and digital innovation has deep implications for the place of journalism in China, challenging the autonomy of media institutions and the character of public debate in a highly controlled context.

Over the past two decades, China has undergone a significant shift in its news consumption habits, largely driven by the proliferation of mobile internet and the rise of short video platforms. Traditional media consumption, once dominated by newspapers, television, and radio, has been increasingly replaced by digital formats, especially among younger generations. Research has indicated that young Chinese audiences under the age of 30 are increasingly accessing news through sites such as Douyin and Kuaishou, where users experience media more interactively and personally (13). This indicates general global patterns of mobile-first consumption, with customers preferring rapid, image-based updates to deep reporting (7). But the shift to digital media in China has also resulted in audience fragmentation, as audiences are now able to access a vast range of content that is targeted to specific interests and tastes. Meanwhile, the government's grip is still tight, with policies and regulations intended to steer the content that is consumed by the public. The increasing popularity of short video news, including Anchor Says, illustrates how this new media situation in China is not merely about technological transformation, but also about the production, consumption, and regulation of news in the digital era. The transition from mainstream media to short video sites is a paradigm shift in the way information is shared, the way audiences engage with the news, and the way journalism itself is adapting to new demands and regulations.

To put the emergence and success of Anchor Says into context, it is important to understand the broader systems of Chinese media policy, censorship, and propaganda. The recent Chinese media landscape is characterized by a complicated interplay between traditional state-controlled media and new digital platforms. Media outlets such as China Central Television (CCTV) and the People's Daily remain entrenched in mainstream media, serving mainly to project the government's voice on national matters. Nonetheless, growing usage of short video apps like Douyin and Kuaishou has brought new dynamics to this highly regulated domain. These apps, albeit providing more interactive and custom news experiences, run under tight regulatory fences erected by the state. Content moderation rules and censorship mechanisms make sure that even user-generated or ostensibly autonomous content adheres to the ideological frameworks established by the government. Anchor Says is one such prime example of the way in which old-fashioned state media is evolving with the times without sacrificing control. The show is an effort to synthesize the traditional reporting style with the quick-paced, visually oriented formats that younger generations prefer. Although the format seems newer and more entertaining, it remains within the context of state propaganda, judiciously weighing entertainment against political content. This approach is indicative of the larger transformation of Chinese propaganda tactics—from explicit ideological guidance to a more indistinct and emotionally charged form of messaging appropriate for the digital age. Academic literature on Chinese media policy and propaganda offers useful insight into this evolution. Research has also found that the Chinese government has not just preserved but updated its methods of controlling information, applying novel media technologies to improve the dissemination of its messages. State media's pivoting into platforms such as Douyin is not a sign of liberalization but, instead, a demonstration of how the government is creative in updating its approaches to controlling different and mobile-first audiences. So. Hence, the success of Anchor Says is not solely the result of shifting consumer behavior or technological change but also a product of mindful policy and strategic content creation that serves state interests. In fact, within

this dynamic media space where distinctions between journalism, propaganda, and entertainment are becoming ever more fluid and indistinct, Anchor Says realizes the changing nature of Chinese state communication.

The Emergence and Structure of "Anchor Says"

Program Overview

Anchor Says is a brief video news broadcast that represents the trend of convergence between journalism and social media entertainment, especially with the use of platforms such as Douyin and Kuaishou. The show uses a short, visually driven style, with videos typically ranging from one to five minutes, suiting the attention span and mobile consumption habits of young audiences (12). Its presentation form is distinctly casual relative to formal news programs—anchors speak in relaxed, conversational terms, frequently using colloquial turns of phrase and on-screen effects that appeal to digital-native viewers (39). This styling is intentional because it closes the distance between formal journalism and social media consumption requirements. The mobile-first launch of Anchor Says guarantees quick access and high interactivity because users can like, comment, and share instantly, engaging with content in real-time (33). It may present in a contemporary manner, yet the show runs with robust institutional support, tending to incorporate the views of state media and following guidelines from the Cyberspace Administration of China (15). This governmental connection places Anchor Says in the position of a digitally responsive extension of official news institutions, charged with keeping ideological continuity while refining the method of delivery to meet modern tastes.

Positioning in the News Ecosystem

Within China's increasingly hybrid media environment, Anchor Says is a strategic realignment of state-sponsored news programming for the age of digital distribution, distinguishing itself from more established outlets such as CCTV News on the basis of tone, presentation, and integration with platforms. While CCTV persists in bringing news in a serious, top-down style with very little audience interaction, Anchor Says rearranges the formula by disseminating carefully vetted information in a story-telling and visually engaging format more attuned to algorithmic feeds (24). This evolution is part of a larger movement in media logic, where the look of social media and the expectations of participation have started to shape the way even official news is packaged and delivered. While it has ideological affinity with state-controlled media and tends to support prevailing political narratives, Anchor Says sits in a space that somewhat intersects with the values of citizen journalism by presenting a seemingly personalized and accessible news experience. Nevertheless, it essentially differs from digital grassroots journalism in the fact that it does not have editorial autonomy and is based on rigidly controlled regulatory systems, ensuring conformity to governmental discourse management policy (36). Therefore, Anchor Says not just reflects but also determines the new forms of China's news consumption patterns, which are a combination of state control and digital media, a merger of state power and digital media, a reflection of state authoritarianism and digital liberalism in Table 2.

Table 2: Comparison between Traditional News and "Anchor Says"

Aspect	Traditional News	"Anchor Says"
Format	Structured, formal, often scripted	Informal, conversational, personalized
Presentation Style	Objective, serious tone, professional	Engaging, often casual, relatable
Platform(s)	TV, radio, official websites	Short video platforms (e.g., Douyin, Kuaishou)
News Delivery Speed	Slow, scheduled broadcast times	Real-time updates, frequent uploads
Audience Interaction	Limited (letters, call-ins)	High (comments, likes, shares, direct interactions)
Content Length	Longer, segmented into bulletins or reports	Short-form, typically under 5 minutes

Credibility	High, governed by journalistic standards	Varied, can depend on the presenter's reputation
Target Audience	General public, all age groups	Primarily younger, digital-native populations
Regulation	Strict, government-controlled, censorship	Less regulation, often bypasses censorship
Purpose	Inform and educate, uphold journalistic ethics	Engage and entertain while informing
Editorial Oversight	High, with editorial boards and fact-checking	Minimal, often depends on the individual host
Influence on Public Opinion	Limited, often based on institutional narratives	High, driven by algorithmic curation and viral content
Political Bias	Often neutral or government-aligned	Can reflect personal opinions or ideologies of presenters
Impact on National Identity	Reflects state-sanctioned narratives	Shaping cultural and social discourse through personal engagement

Thematic Analysis of Literature: Key Influence Areas

Influence on News Reporting Styles

The literature indicates a significant change in news styles of reporting in China as a result of the impact of short video shows such as Anchor Says, especially with regards to the delivery and reception of news. Classical Chinese broadcast journalism, exemplified by CCTV, is normally formal, authoritative, and hierarchical, frequently prioritizing institutional credibility over audience involvement (41). Nonetheless, Anchor Says has made a more conversational and individualistic style of news presentation fashionable, with the use of informal language, accessible commentary, and performance-like presence that is akin to social media influencers (24). This shift in style is consistent with the evolving tastes of digital consumers who prefer content that is perceived as authentic and personally engaging. Consequently, there has been a perceivable influence on journalistic tone throughout digital newsrooms, with some conventional broadcasters now adopting similar aspects of storytelling, unofficial presentation, and emotional appeal in order to compete with the media landscape (14). Scholars contend that this blending of journalistic and entertainment formats might portend the development of "soft journalism," in which information dissemination is crafted not only to inform but to also emotionally engage and sustain viewer attention (42). Anchor Says represents a larger world trend in which digital media embraces relaxed, interactive formats to communicate with consumers, diverging from formal, authoritative reporting. This is consistent with global moves toward "soft journalism," which synthesizes entertainment and information. Comparing Anchor Says to this international framework provides greater insight into China's changing digital propaganda in global media. Therefore, Anchor Says is leading the way in a wider shift towards Chinese media away from the austere, formal tone of legacy media to a more flexible, audience-focused model of communication.

Credibility and Trust Issues

One of the dominant themes in the research relates to how Anchor Says manages the seemingly treacherous landscape of media credibility and trust in a digitally cynical time. On the one hand, research suggests that the friendly tone and entertaining format of the show have increased its perceived credibility among younger generations who are overall skeptical about mainstream media but open to digital influencers and peer recommendations (2). Conversely, however, there are fears that this trust is superficial and based more on affective bonding than on factual accuracy, particularly in light of the state-aligned nature of the content. The application of short-form narrative has been discovered to play a role in trust establishment through clarity, concision, and repetition of central themes, evoking a sense of familiarity and emotional connection with the audience (8). Nonetheless, the conflation of journalism and entertainment prompts concerns regarding the long-term effect on public confidence in factual reporting. Anchor Says is

generally regarded as more down-to-earth but less balanced compared to traditional media, and its increasing popularity can be seen as a sign of a change in how Chinese viewers understand credibility—not necessarily through objectivity, but through perceived truthfulness, usability, and user interaction (10). This shifting trust model highlights the intricate dynamic between digital form, audience perception, and institutional control in China's hybrid media landscape.

Agenda-Setting and Framing

A second fundamental theme of the literature that was reviewed is the way Anchor Says operates as an online agenda-setting and narrative-framing tool to shape what issues are brought to the forefront and how they are understood by the public. With reference to past study (37) agenda-setting theory, scholars observe Anchor Says to play a pivotal function in influencing public focus by filtering news stories aligned with state interest while using emotive framing mechanisms to optimize viewership. In contrast to conventional news shows with a hierarchical editing procedure, Anchor Says employs algorithm-driven content curation, favoring issues likely to elicit extensive amounts of interaction, like nationalist feeling, public health, or moral society (11). This type of framing subtly guides public discourse through amplifying specific values or viewpoints while downplaying opposing opinions. In addition, the visual and narrative strategies of the program—like presenting through humor, metaphors, or the use of easy explanations—make contributions towards framing effects that support prevailing ideologies in an appealing format. Even though it takes the form of grassroots media, Anchor Says ends up playing a top-down role in bringing public awareness into line with government-sanctioned narratives, thereby serving as an example of advanced propaganda development during the digital media era (1).

Audience Engagement and Interaction

The interactive functions integrated into sites such as Douyin, on which Anchor Says is most widely shared, have radically altered how audiences interact with news content, subverting classical assumptions of passive consumption. Features such as comments, likes, and shares allow audiences to instantaneously respond to and share content, thereby producing a feedback system in which public opinion can impact the content and

framing of future news videos (3). Although this interaction seems to democratize media by making audience voices heard in real time, scholars caution that this interactivity can be illusory and even tampered with. Algorithms will resonate with content that supports prevailing ideological narratives or produces strong emotions, which may repress dissenting opinions or nuanced debates. This is concerning in terms of whether or not the engagement mechanisms of the platform are creating authentic public conversation or merely serving to reenforce pre-existing messages through deliberate popularity (31). Further, the responsiveness of the user can lead to pressure on content producers to emphasize virality over depth and produce sensationalized or reductionist framings of important issues (5). Younger viewers may see it as a modern and credible source due to its format, while older or more educated audiences might approach it with skepticism, recognizing its alignment with state narratives. Trust levels and interpretations vary widely, shaping how effectively the content influences public perception. Therefore, although Anchor Says seems to invite engagement, the interaction architecture beneath is still tightly controlled by platform algorithms and political borders, making it difficult to conceive of digital empowerment in China's media environment.

Journalism Ethics and Professional Standards

The success of Anchor Says and other such brief video news programs has caused the growing convergence of journalism, entertainment, and opinion, and raises serious questions about professional standards of digital news production. Researchers contend that the stylistic evolution toward relaxed, emotive narrative diminishes the old lines between objective reporting and personal opinion, challenging journalistic standards like impartiality, source validation, and editorial strictness (33). The emphasis on engagement and connectability in the program usually is at the cost of thorough reporting, as complicated stories are distilled into brief, eye-catching videos that might compromise on factual precision in favor of narrative simplicity (43). Additionally, the absence of editorial control in such forms brings in the danger of misinformation or partisan framing, particularly when content fits neatly with political agendas. Ethical issues also come from anchors acting as both influencers and journalists in the

performative dimension, presenting news with a personal touch that blurs the line between substantiated facts and personal interpretation (39). Here, journalism ethics are not abandoned but recontextualized within a system that privileges affect, virality, and ideological congruence over old standbys of credibility and accountability, a redefinition of what counts as "reporting" in the digital age. Application of influencer-inclined aesthetics in state-sponsored productions like Anchor Says reconstructs journalism into a more emotive and personality-based format, which is particularly popular among the youth. This aesthetic change, however, comes at the cost of journalistic practices like objectivity, fact-based accuracy, and editorial attention. Anchors who double as journalists and entertainers dilute the line between opinion and reporting. In the process, the conventional norms are neither fully discarded but are slowly reinterpreted in terms of digital platforms as well as political objectives. This development is a source of ethical anxiety and threatens the integrity of news content.

Technological and Algorithmic Impact

Infrastructure technology and algorithmic processes are key to the dissemination and effects of programs such as Anchor Says, especially in how content is delivered and affects audiences (Table 3). Sites like Douyin utilize advanced recommendation systems that algorithmically personalize news feeds according to user actions, and content that has greater engagement potential gets prioritized irrespective of its editorial worth (3). This system promotes a culture wherein virality as the prevailing mechanism of news transmission tends to privilege emotionally resonant or ideologically aligned stories supportive of state ends and audience appeal (2). The research points out that such algorithmic selection can keep critical or nuance journalism out of the main stream, in favor of one that is quickly digestible and widely appealing. Consequently, editorial accountability is secondary to algorithmic efficiency, with minimal transparency as to how decisions are reached about news visibility or suppression. Furthermore, researchers observe that such algorithms are not politically neutral—they are embedded in China's wider regulatory environment, which requires compliance with state-approved narratives and strict content controls. Therefore, while technological progress has facilitated unparalleled reach and efficiency in news transmission, it has also brought new layers of control and bias, restructuring the informational landscape in ways that value influence and conformity over pluralism and journalistic independence.

Table 3: Thematic Summary of Reviewed Literature

Theme	Key Findings	Author(s) and Year
Influence on News Reporting Styles	Short video platforms like *Anchor Says* promote a conversational, informal style of news delivery that engages younger, digital-native audiences.	(18, 31)
Credibility and Trust	Trust in short video journalism is often lower than traditional media, due to its informal nature and the blending of entertainment with news.	(32)
Agenda-Setting and Framing	Short video platforms influence public agenda through algorithmic curation, selecting and framing news topics to drive engagement.	(43)
Audience Engagement	High levels of audience interaction (likes, comments, shares) on platforms like Douyin help shape news content and public discourse.	(3, 23)
Ethics and Professional Standards	The blurring of lines between entertainment, opinion, and news in short video journalism raises concerns about journalistic integrity and factual accuracy.	(6, 15)
Technological Impact	Algorithmic dissemination on platforms like Douyin influences which news reaches audiences, potentially creating bias in content delivery.	(5, 24)

Political Discourse and National Identity	Short video journalism, particularly *Anchor Says*, plays a significant role in shaping public political discourse and national identity, often aligning with or challenging state narratives.	(9, 10)
Misinformation and Superficial Coverage	There is growing concern over the spread of misinformation and oversimplified coverage due to the fast-paced nature of short video news.	(3, 44)
Citizen Journalism and User-Generated Content	The rise of citizen journalism through platforms like *Anchor Says* allows for more personalized and diverse news coverage but also raises concerns about credibility.	(15, 16)
Regulation and Censorship	The regulatory landscape for short video journalism in China is complex, with government influence shaping content and the use of censorship tools.	(4, 43)

Discussion

The presence of Anchor Says and other such short video news programs has broader social and cultural consequences, specifically for youth and digitally native citizens in China. These programs provide for a readership that expects to receive swift, bite-sized information, a style of consuming news that is more interactive and visually stimulating compared to traditional forms of media (4). For younger viewers, Anchor Says is not only a news source but also a cultural touchstone that shapes their perceptions of what counts, particularly regarding current events, national identity, and political debates. The program's focus on familiar, personalized presentation resonates with a generation that prioritizes authenticity and familiarity, potentially inspiring a sense of civic awareness and engagement in viewers who might otherwise be detached from mainstream news sources (24). Yet, this relationship is not without its nuances, as the fusion of information with entertainment can shape the way young people understand political and social issues, tending to reinforce government narratives without offering the critical tools for sophisticated understanding (5). Anchor Says is also instrumental in defining national identity because it delivers the news filtered through the way China thinks and feels, quietly nudge the public in directions that enhance national cohesion and ideological consistency. While it makes information more democratic, it also poses questions regarding the degree to which short video news platforms manipulate public opinion by presenting issues in a manner that benefits state-approved narratives. Anchor Says, therefore, not only affects how news is consumed but also plays a role in shaping collective memory and political discourse in modern China.

Challenges Identified in the Literature

Literature draws attention to a number of problems in connection with the development of short video journalism, notably concerning the regulation and censorship of material, the dissemination of false information, and research restrictions caused by the lack of transparency of digital platforms. In China, brief video shows such as Anchor Says are under tight government control both in terms of content and narratives being told, with fears of censorship and suppression of oppositional opinions (13). These regulatory controls tend to lead to a homogenized news landscape, in which reporting on politically contentious issues is reduced or presented in ways that support state-sanctioned messaging (10). A second prominent issue in the literature is the rising incidence of misinformation, with Anchor Says and other such platforms occasionally favoring sensationalized reporting that can be lacking in factual accuracy or balanced reporting. This trend is particularly troubling because short video formats, with their emphasis on brevity and visual appeal, can oversimplify complex issues, leading to the spread of misleading narratives (12). Lastly, the transparency of online platforms is a serious challenge for researchers since algorithms controlling content delivery are not open, and it becomes hard to estimate the complete level of editorial control or even grasp how news is curated and distributed to various audiences. This transparency shortcoming constrains scholarly research and prevents assessment of the long-term impacts of short video journalism on public opinion, media literacy, and democratic discourse.

Limitations and Future Directions

While this study sheds light on the role of Anchor Says in news reporting in China, it has its limitations that can be rectified in subsequent research. One of the key limitations is the use of available literature, which largely centers on the immediate effects of short video journalism without providing us with detailed longitudinal analyses to scrutinize its long-term influence on political discourse and public opinion. Moreover, given the fast rate at which technology evolves and digital platforms continue to change, the results can become outdated very rapidly, as platforms such as Douyin and Kuaishou add features or change algorithms. Another issue arises due to the intrinsic difficulties in researching content on government-controlled platforms, where censorship and state control over narratives may hide an accurate representation of the content's actual influence on public awareness. Future studies can delve into more varied methodological methods, such as qualitative analyses of audience perceptions and participation, and experimental designs to quantify the effects of short video journalism on political behavior and attitudes. More also needs to be focused on the cross-cultural dimensions of short video news because these sites not only construct Chinese audiences but are also capable of affecting global media consumption habits. Researchers should also explore the ethical considerations of algorithmic content distribution and its impact on public opinion, with a focus on transparency and accountability in platform management. Lastly, a better understanding of the convergence between entertainment, news, and political messaging in short video forms can help improve the theoretical models applied to the study of digital journalism.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research pinpoints the revolutionary effect that Anchor Says has brought to the terrain of Chinese news reporting, providing insights on how short video websites are remolding journalistic processes and citizen participation. Dominant themes that emerge include the integration of information and entertainment, personalized delivery of news, and coping with maintaining credibility and journalistic integrity in a more algorithmic world. Anchor Says is a key marker of China's digital news transition, illustrating changing dynamics between state-controlled media and the rising influence of digital platforms geared towards younger, digitally native readers. As a style of journalism, it defies conventional norms, prioritizing interactivity, concision, and emotional resonance while posing important questions regarding factuality, censorship, and the influence of algorithms on public debate. In the end, Anchor Says is a perfect reflection of the general media convergence of the new media era, whereby news, entertainment, and opinion lines continue to blur, which necessitates the redefinition of journalistic processes. This change necessitates journalists and consumers alike to redefine what credible news is and how media can be both informative and politically constitutive in society.

Abbreviation

None.

Author Contributions

Noor Mayudia Mothar: conceptualized the study, writing, editing, critical revision of the manuscript, supervised the overall structure of the manuscript, Xiaojie Hu: literature review, data collection, figure/table preparation, writing, editing, critical revision of the manuscript, served as corresponding author. All authors approved the final version of the manuscript.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Ethics Approval

Not applicable.

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