

# *Case Study Report-Analysis of Hack by Triple J and Junkee*

LINXIN WANG

*Monash University Australia, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia*

**Keywords:** Youth media, Traditional media, Young people, Hack by triple j, junkee

**Abstract:** An increasing number of young people have lost their interests in browsing news and sharing their opinions on traditional news outlets, because they are stereotyped in most mainstream media organizations which also treat youth's comments as without any authoritative. To correct the mainstream media's misrepresentation and ignorance of young people, some online media platforms have devoted to develop youth journalism and encourage their digital engagement. In this report, the author choose Hack by Triple J and Junkee, the representative youth media in Australia, as two cases to analyze the reasons why they are more popular among Aussie youth than conventional media outlets and how they Reinvigorate young people's political participation.

## **1. Introduction**

In recent years, young people have been stereotyped in most mainstream media coverage, plus continuous adverse news coverage of youth issues, they are regarded as 'either over-the-edge violent sociopaths or vulgar brainless pleasure-seekers'<sup>[1]</sup>. According to this, young people's comments are often claimed as news sources without authority and credible, they have no right to reply and express their opinions, even being refused to access news. The persistent negative bias against young people in television news media coverage is likely to affect youth viewing themselves correctly and discourage them from using the news media<sup>[2]</sup>. Furthermore, most traditional news coverage generally has a rigid reporting model and specialized news language, which lacks interaction and emotional communication with the audience. Most young people gradually lose interest in browsing news and can't find what they are interested in conventional news media

However, with the advent of the digital era, an increasing number of online media outlets discover the actual value among youth, which devotes to provide the young audience with diverse information in different perspectives and forms. Among this, Hack by Triple J and Junkee as the analysis object of this report builds an interactive and tight relationship with Aussie youth. They are trying to correct the mainstream media's misrepresentation and ignorance of young people. It aims to create content that fit young people's tastes, give them a public voice, and encourage their digital engagement. In a word, these two cases demonstrate a more realistic and innovative form of youth journalism.

## **2. Analysis of Triple J Hack and Junkee**

In the digital media era, the digital transformation of many media platforms has threatened the stable revenue model of mainstream journalism service. Therefore, journalism start-ups forced themselves to try new technologies to adapt to this circumstance. As a well-known digital media company, Junkee media launched Junkee in 2013. They announced that it is “Australia’s smartest and most original pop culture title,” which is very novel in content design and devoted to serving Aussie youth. It combines politics with pop culture, Emphasizes sociability and mobile phone first. The content of Junkee is designed from the perspective of exciting young people’s exciting friends to stimulate user’s reading interests and enable them to keep abreast of all the issues they want to know [3]. At the same time, Triple J Hack is the title of a current affairs news program on Australia famous radio broadcaster Triple J, which aims at the young audience aged 18 to 34. It presents the daily content of innovative topics to the audience in the form of a radio program. Furthermore, their topic selection is very inclusive, including politics, economy, and culture. Young people from different states in Australia can participate in the connection through live calls to share their opinions daily. It not only can widen young people’s horizons but also encourages participation in the discussion of current affairs. Meanwhile, people can listen to this program on the podcast, or download MP3 format audio through web pages, which also dramatically increases mobility and convenience of Triple J Hack.

## 2.1 Youth Media

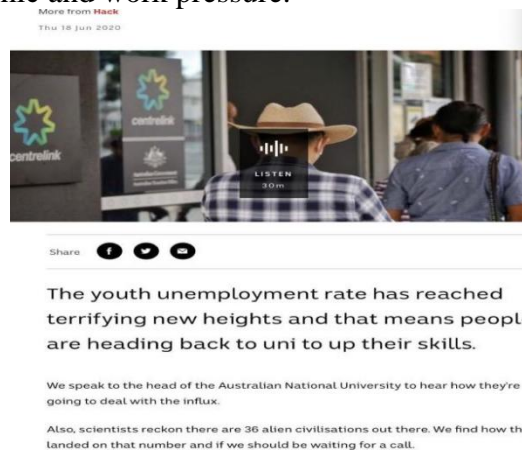
As O’Donnell [4] mentioned, the Aussie online media platform targeted at the young audience is increasing. The form of Junkee and Triple J Hack proves that there has been a considerable change in accessing news and information among youth. Furthermore, their content is edited and equipped by young journalists and editors. These people fully understand social media knowledge and the preferences of the Aussie teen and will attempt to communicate and interact with them actively. Thus, the connection between producers and the audience sufficiently promotes content sharing, enabling young people to share content on their favorite social platforms. This behavior also increases the visibility of these youth media outlets, demonstrates integrity, both of which can attract more advertisers to a large extent. Moreover, Carson and Muller [5] argued that the biggest fear of current Aussie youth is that FOMO (fear of missing out) and FONK (fear of not knowing), Unlike traditional media newsroom, the digital youth media would not cover everything, they will seize the area that young audience is interested. Their news content is niche, with the purpose is to provide every audience with the information they want to access.



*Fig.1 Junkee Combined the Current Keyword “Self-Isolation” with the Hottest Nintendo Switch Game “Animal Crossing,”*

For example, Junkee always strives to combine their content with pop-culture to provoke the youth's interests. In Fig. 1, Junkee combined the current keyword “self-isolation” with the hottest Nintendo Switch game “Animal Crossing,” the topic they selected in line with the concerns of the young audience. Furthermore, the use of language can be claimed as “platform-vernacular,” these non-elite, daily communication makes young people feel very relaxed and joyful; it makes them willing to take the initiative to read. Another flashpoint is this article also collects 20 examples of incredible memes from Animal Crossing, which includes a lot of humorous, innovative, and original content published by *Animal Crossing* players on Twitter. This shows that this highly entertaining content encourages the audience to share, which accelerates the exposure process of Junkee to no small extent.

On the other hand, Triple J Hack as for a radio program that also devotes to share stuff matters to a young audience. Unlike other digital media platforms, it delivers information to its audience in the form of media broadcasting during weekdays. In this way, young people can reduce the frequency of using mobile phones and communicate with presenters and guests through the formation of radio waves. They are also more likely to find many like-minded friends, which is very conducive to relaxing and alleviating academic and work pressure.



*Fig.2 Most of Their Topics Have Tight Connections with Youth Issues,*

In general, Triple J Hack will produce a 30-mins radio program from each Monday to Friday. Most of their topics have tight connections with youth issues, as shown in youth unemployment in Fig. 2. At the same time, they will invite experts in related fields to conduct discussions to develop interactive communication with their audience and consider young people's perspectives. Thus, Triple J Hack has a very different starting point. Its attitude compared with traditional media encourages more young people to share opinions, change some of their stereotypes, and allow youth issues to get more attention from the public and society.

## 2.2 Politics Participation

Young people are considered to be not yet ready for citizenship and are highly susceptible to advertising messages, which may affect their judgment. Moreover, many people worry that young people gathered in public places will cause danger, especially someone with dark and brown skin, plus parents are worried about their children being hurt in public. Therefore, various worries result in youth rarely being invited to participate in political and life decisions <sup>[6]</sup>. Thus, the meager political participation of young people and their decreasing political interests have gradually become acceptable facts as well. But with the popularity of the Internet, Bakker and de Vreese <sup>[7]</sup> argued the role of media in affecting the political involvement among younger people has

become increasingly important. For instance, during the 2008 US presidential election, President Obama used social media and media outlets as communication tools. He aimed at young people who regularly use social media and the Internet to develop political propaganda and achieve satisfactory results. So it can be seen that the media indeed affects political participation among younger people.

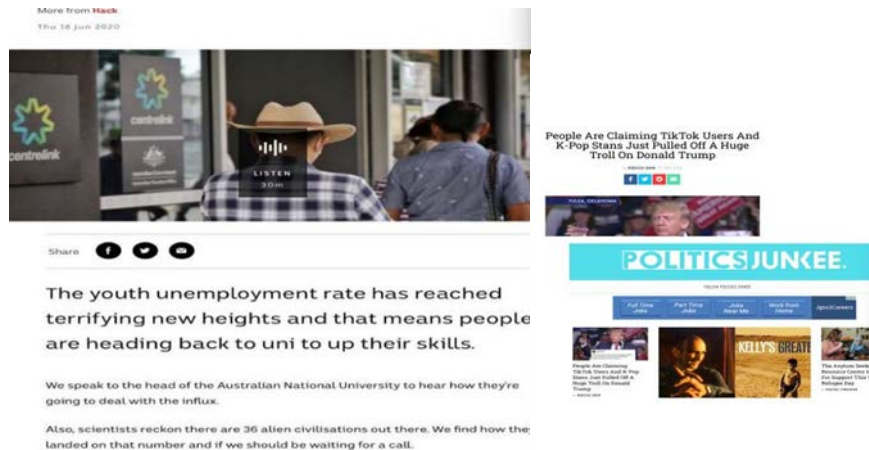


Fig.3 Junkee Specially Set Up a Political Section Named Politics Junkee

Likewise, as for the youth media, both Junkee and Triple J Hack contain many contents related to politics in order to encourage political participation among young people. In Fig.3, Junkee specially set up a political section named politics Junkee, which usually talks about politics with an accessible way, because they know the audience of this outlet is young Australians. The relaxing tone, opinion, and attitude are inserted in each article referred to politics. Furthermore, the audience can also participate directly on Twitter via the example of Twitter Post listed in Junkee's article, which also can make the public get a more profound realization to the voice of youth.



Fig.4 Chinese Students Warned Against Studying in 'racis' Australia

On the other hand, the uniqueness of the topic in Triple J Hack is always eye-catching. For example, Triple J Hack has drawn the public attention on Chinese students, and extended to the thinking of the political situation between China and Australia, although as Chinese students who are more easily overlooked by the Australian media in the current period. Plus, the interactive tone and different guests in the radio program can stimulate the youth's political involvement and desire to communicate.

### 3. Evaluation

Compared with the traditional news coverage, both Triple J Hack and Junkee can skillfully use emotion to attract users' reading interest and enhance interaction; they also make use of it to encourage the audience to share. As Hurcombe, Burgess, and Harrington<sup>[8]</sup> mentioned, emotions in news reporting are essential, which are the key for the audience to obtain information, and develop communication and collaboration. Instead, many people begin to query that "emotional" content will affect fairness and objectivity of media coverage because it undermines the principle of objectivity in traditional news reporting. Despite this, Triple J Hack and Junkee have a very transparent position, which is different from the non-emotional and stereotypical reporting model in traditional news coverage. Firstly, the author of each article in these two cases will not narrate away from the story itself when bringing it into emotion. Secondly, their target audience is Aussie youth; this allows their content to be customized for this audience.

Furthermore, the emergence of digital media makes it easier for people to access and produce information; one of the benefits brought by digital media is giving people who have underrepresented a voice. Plus, young people have abundant digital media lives, which leads to more and more media outlets regard them as their primary audience. However, the opinions made by young people on youth media platforms may be embedded in a complex social and political environment, at the same time, which will also surround the pressure and norms of the pop-culture. Furthermore, People's voices posted on the Internet may be presented in non-verbal forms: emoticons, GIF, self-produced video, etc. Since each audience is an independent individual, they have entirely different production environments, and political experiences, coupled with the lack of positive discrimination and self-control of young people, some of their speech may bring some unnecessary troubles on the Internet. On the other hand, the original intention of 'let authentic voice speaks' has been disturbing under a complicated network circumstance, many young people are not willing to express their views on the real issue, they prefer to make a lot of comments that have nothing to do with the severe problem, which results in the actual issue not being resolved, and some authentic voice being hidden. Furthermore, for youth who are in marginalized communities, are afraid of speaking out, because they think that keeping silence and pretending to be ignorant can well maintain the bond with the community and the relationship between parents<sup>[9]</sup>. Their silence can also be claimed as a barrier, causing them to lack interaction with youth media outlets.

## 4. Conclusion

In recent years, with the appearance of more and more youth media in Australia, the competition between them has also grown increasingly fierce. Although Triple J Hack and Junkee have gained particular popularity and achieved more significant influence, in order to be able to make lasting prosperity on the fast-changing digital media platform, they also need to keep innovations in content and platform design, then devote to provide a more diverse and meaningful news environment for young Australians.

## References

- [1] Van Kruistum, C, Leseman, P and de Haan, M 2014, 'Youth Media Lifestyles', *Human Communication Research*, vol.40, no.4, pp.508-529.
- [2] [4] O'Donnell, P 2016, *Getting social: the rise of youth media in Australia*, *Future leaders*, viewed June 23 2020,
- [3] [http://www.futureleaders.com.au/book\\_chapters/pdf/Media-Innovation-Disruption/Penny-ODonnell.pdf](http://www.futureleaders.com.au/book_chapters/pdf/Media-Innovation-Disruption/Penny-ODonnell.pdf)Getting Social:
- [4] Duggan T 2013, *Welcome to Junkee, Junkee*, viewed 22 June 2020, <http://web.archive.org/web/20151117021029/http://junkee.com/welcome-to-junkee/616>
- [5] Carson, A & Muller,D 2017, *a report of commissioned by Facebook, The future newsroom, the university of Melbourne*, viewed 20 June 2020.

- [6] Clark, L.S & Marchi, R 2017, *Young people and the future of news : social media and the rise of connective journalism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- [7] Bakker, T and de Vreese, C 2011, 'Good News for the Future? Young People, Internet Use, and Political Participation', *Communication Research*, vol.38, no.4, pp.451-470.
- [8] Hurcombe, E., Burgess, J. and Harrington, S 2019. What's newsworthy about 'social news'? Characteristics and potential of an emerging genre. *Journalism*,
- [9] Dussel, I and Dahya, N 2016. Introduction: problematizing voice and representation in youth media production. *Learning, Media and Technology*, vol.42, no.1, pp.1-7.