

# Local-Level Authoritarianism, Democratic Normative Aspirations, and Antipress Harassment: Predictors of Threats to Journalists in Mexico | The International Journal of Press/Politics

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Cross-national research has identified crime, corruption, and human rights abuses as explanations for threats against journalists in democracies and authoritarian hybrids plagued by antipress violence. In-depth studies additionally suggest gender or occupational characteristics such as risky newsbeats increase the likelihood of being threatened. We overcome data limitations in many of these studies by analyzing work-related threats reported by journalists in Mexico, a territorially uneven democracy. Findings confirm that contexts of criminal insecurity are the strongest predictor of threats but only for journalists who are frequently harassed. For the infrequently threatened, democratic normative commitments are a stronger predictor. Subnational government corruption is another important predictor of threat but operates counter to expectations. We believe this is because clientelism sufficiently controls journalists without the need for threat. Neither occupational traits nor gender were individually important predictors. Findings suggest future research should compare threat and harassment across lower and higher risk contexts, and measure public insecurity and clientelism at the local level where journalists actually work. Measurement improvements might better reveal the gender dynamics of threat. More broadly, comparative research and policy-making in democracies and authoritarian hybrids should focus on how local authoritarians limit journalists' democratic normative aspirations.

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