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RESEARCH ARTICLE

DIGITALIZATION PROCESS AND CHANGES IN MEDIA LANDSCAPE

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Abstract

Journalism nowadays is more challenging than ever before. The questions raised here are essential for the future of journalism and all those who believe that journalism matters. News is defined as how power flows through media organizations, influencing what journalists choose to present to their audiences and how they present it and then, in turn, what their audiences do with it. The digital age changes many journalism events, showing us that the text could even be written by artificial intelligence. Several challenges are critical. The digital era moves media companies from positions where they were gatekeepers and creators of the news agenda to platforms where companies control audiences. Social media and platforms allow audiences to collect information from many sources. Unfortunately, to live in an era of fake news and a crowd of information, at the same time, means to losing the war for journalism, and in the worstcase, losing public trust. On the other side, the business model of media organizations weakens professional journalism, as it is faced with commercial and political pressure resulting in more diverse news than ever. The shifts in news consumption are even more pronounced if one looks at the age of news consumers. There is a massive generation gap, with young people far more likely to seek information on digital platforms and older people more reliant on traditional media. Simultaneously, it is more costly to produce news for traditional media outlets that send reporters to news hot spots worldwide, take time for in-depth reporting projects and hire more expensive and experienced journalists. So, even, the so called, old media, if they want to survive, they must turn to multimedia. So, the new era, demands new skills. A journalist needs to know how to write a story. News programs are so interesting because they have a form of storytelling, a vital technique for every period. However, nowadays, more important is to visualize and put the text about a video. Also, today's journalists are 24/7 online, and they produce news rapidly, first on the website then maybe on Twitter (old name for X) and other social media channels. Therefore, multimedia journalism is about more than multimedia. In spite of all new technologies, one thing will be always, more important. One can not be a good journalist if he/she is not curious. With all of the available tools, journalists need to understand how to use them technically and comprehend how each multimedia format can best be used for storytelling.

Introduction:-

Journalism is clearly defined in every book dedicated to the topic. The stories are not chosen by chance, but through rules, according to agenda settings or editorial policy. These practical rules in journalism are everyday routine, but there is a more profound way of thinking behind them: what is the culture, ideology, and power, and on what basis will the events be chosen? Trainee journalists may at first find it hard to work out what is considered 'newsworthy.' This process of learning is part of professional training, but it is also a means by which ideological bias is transmitted from one generation to another (Phillips, 2015).

When these rules are made, and messages are sent through media that produce the same norms, political economists and cultural theorists usually quote Antonio Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony. He argued that this is a process, not an end; far from passively accepting ideas that have been fed to them, people need to be continuously won over, and through this natural resistance to power, Gramsci saw the seeds of change (Gramsci, 1973).

On the other side, Bourdieu and Wacquant theorize that individuals are shaped first by their social environment (family, education, class, gender), and each person defines themselves in relation to their peers. However, this is not a fixed state. They describe this as *Habitus* (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Commercial interests constrain the field of journalism. Journalists working for non-commercial organizations are more autonomous. In contrast, those working for highly commercial organizations are less autonomous in that they are primarily constrained by external commercial considerations and the need to attract audiences. (Benson, 2006).

As the Internet has ushered in a more 'open' form of journalism, in which audience feedback seems to take center stage, some researchers see the collapse of a hegemonic model of news production, with audiences becoming more involved both in interacting with news and in authoring news reports (Beckett, 2008)(Jarvis, 2006)(Russell, 2011).

New technologies have changed the way we communicate. We have advanced from desktop computers to laptops to iPads to smartphones to smartwatches in a single generation. This new world is digital. Journalism in this new era is also digital, seeking journalists who are well-trained with multiple skills.

However, even in this digital age, there is still an unchanged, old-fashioned aspect to it. Multimedia journalism has the same rules for accuracy, fairness, and ethics. The public simply consumes it differently. And the public consumes it incessantly (Dunham, 2020).

So, the final question that opens before us is the future of journalism and what we need to know.

The Challenges Of Journalism In The Digital Age

Media organizations create the news agenda, but platform companies control access to the audiences

News nowadays is more accessible than ever before. Everyone who has a mobile and internet connection can read all day. In the past, there were just two forms of media, print and electronic, but today, everybody has a piece of news in his/her pocket. It also means that the platform companies that people rely on when navigating digital and mobile media are increasingly important for accessing and engaging with news and public life. We have moved from a world of direct discovery, where media organizations controlled both content and channels, to a world increasingly characterized by distributed discovery, where media organizations still create content. However, people access it through platform products and services like search engines, social media, and news aggregators.

In 2018, two-thirds of online news users across 37 identified different markets worldwide distributed forms of discovery as their primary way of accessing and finding news online (Newman, et al., 2018). Amongst those under 35, three-quarters relied primarily on distributed discovery¹.

¹The Reuters Institute *Digital News Report* is based on a nationally representative of adult news users with internet access and in 2018 covered 37 markets on 5 continents with a combined population of 1.6 billion. It is the largest ongoing international survey of news and media use in the world and map of global trends. More info at <http://www.digitalnewsreport.org>

The news agenda is framed in the editors' room in this digital world, but they are not the gatekeepers, as they were 10 years ago. Now we witness two kinds of gatekeepers: editorial rooms that control the content, and the medial platforms that control access to the audience. From the perspective of creating public opinion, the second one is more significant because they can see how much a news item is being read and what is most important at the moment.

What is particularly worrying in journalism today is the possibility of spreading false news that a media-literate person can easily and immediately recognize. However, not everyone has the time and opportunity to do so, so the digitized world has given us easy access to the news, but on the other hand, a good journalist must always take care of the sound, old-fashioned fact-checking, and verification process.

Digital media drives the audience to use more different sources of information

Empirical research finds that using Facebook and Twitter forces people to use different news sources, but in practice, most of us follow three or four news sources on a routine basis. However, there is inequality between people who like to read the news and those interested in other content. This inequality is often seen in both economic and social differences (Newman, et al., 2018).

In some cases, the choice of news is also due to the political orientation of the reader. People often choose what is close to their political, moral, and other views and values. When they read something like this, they perceive sources as objective and accurate. However, information inequality is a real risk, as is political polarisation – risks fundamentally rooted in political and social factors but can be amplified by technology.

Journalism in the digital era loses the attention of audiences, and in the worst scenario, loses the public trust

Most people, digital media use is thus associated with more diverse news use, but information. The rapid development of technology and social networks has made the news accessible to all. Some people are addicted to the news and check it several times in a row, and others go to a site. These differences are not only due to the public's interest, but in many countries, the question arises as to whether journalists and the media can be trusted.

There are significant variations from group to group, and country to country, but across 37 markets surveyed in 2018, only 44% of respondents said they trust most media most of the time, with a gap between 49% of liberals in the United States expressing trust in the news, compared to just 17% of conservatives, and ranging from a high 62% who trust the news in Finland to a low of just 25% in South Korea (Newman, et al., 2018).

These trust issues are tied in with partisan political attacks on independent journalism and widespread concern in much of the world where many feel news media are unduly influenced by outside economic and political interests (Newman, et al., 2017).

Distrust in the media also comes from much misinformation. This informational oversupply causes a crisis not only in the organizations but also in the public trust. Attacks on journalism and news media by these and other political and business leaders can further undermine trust, demonstrating how trust in journalism depends on reliable reporting and political context where public officials respect independent news media (Van Duyn & Collier, 2018).

The media's business model weakens journalism and leaves it exposed to economic and political pressures

The media always took care of their viewership, entertainment, and reading because they depended on it financially. The only exception to this is public broadcasters, financed in other ways (without commercials).

However, with the digitalization of the media and the increasing consumption of news across platforms, advertisers are increasingly following readers, increasing the sophisticated targeting of the audience. This set-up reduces the quality of the news because, in the clicking race, it forces a sensationalist approach to reporting (in this context, fake news can also be analyzed). The risk here is that a less robust business of journalism is more vulnerable to media capture by the state or politically motivated owners and to pressure from advertisers (Nielsen, 2016). We already see governments across the world strategically using state advertising to influence news media, just as some private interests are subsidizing, or sometimes acquiring, news media to advance their commercial or ideological agenda (Schiffrin, 2017).

News is diverse: the new generation of journalists needs more education and new skills

Today, journalists are forced to work on various topics, constantly in the race against time, but to some extent, it makes them know less and less about the problems they write about. Investigative journalism is marginalized and almost abandoned. On the other hand, digital media have given access to many marginalized groups and the opportunity to hear more sources. Media literate-people have the opportunity to do fact-checking. In a word, digital media have enabled the expression of many views. However, a significant difference should be made between what individuals do by expressing views through blogs and other formats and what good quality journalism means by presenting verified and confirmed facts.

New Era, New Skills

A journalist needs to know how to write a story. News programs are so interesting because they have a form of storytelling, a vital technique for every period. However, nowadays, more important is to visualize and put the text in relation to a video. Also, today's journalists are 24/7 online, and they produce news rapidly, first on the website then maybe on Twitter and other social media channels. Therefore, multimedia journalism is about more than multimedia. It is not enough to learn how to create interactive graphics, slide shows, timelines, data visualizations, and embedded documents (Dunham, 2020).

To do this, today, journalists need to know a few things. They must concentrate on the "why" in the story, provide the analysis and context, and focus on the audience's attention. It is imperative to give information that is correct in writing and pleasant, but also very interesting and informative. One cannot be a good journalist if he/she is not curious. With all of the available tools, journalists need to understand how to use them technically and comprehend how each multimedia format can best be used for storytelling. "Each medium is very, very special, and you have to understand the best of each medium, rather than taking the old content and plunking it on the web," Joyce Barnathan, president of the International Center for Journalists, told the Global Business Journalism Program² (Dunham, 2020).

Information is everywhere, so good news must deliver value. A journalist can add more value if s/he gives people a nugget of wisdom or insight that they have not seen or heard anywhere else. "You're not competing based on whether you have unique news," writes journalism blogger Steve Yelvington. "You're competing with the entire world based on the value that consumers get out of your product." (Yelvington, 2009).

To tell stories, nowadays, journalists use social media, and they are omnipresent. Social media can be used to find analyses and information, but they have a wicked side, such as spreading fake news. Not all audiences possess media literacy to recognize what is true and what is a lie. Even if it suggests a conservative value, a journalist must be careful and fair. Accuracy is vital and gives credibility to the reporter. There is no way to define what is meant by fairness explicitly. Charles L. Overby, the former CEO of the Newseum in Washington, suggested the following alphabetical approach to journalistic fairness: Accuracy+Balance+Clarity+Detachment+Ethics= Fairness (Overby, 2009).

In the end, we must mention ethics, as a standard, as a value. The bottom line is that quality journalism is more important than ever in today's world of rapidly changing news delivery.

Conclusion:-

New technologies have changed the way we communicate. We have advanced from desktop computers to laptops to iPads to smartphones to smartwatches in a single generation. This new world is digital. Journalism in this new era is digital, needing journalists who are well-trained with multiple skills. One of the challenges of journalism is, that we have moved from a world of direct discovery, where media organizations control both content and channels, to a world increasingly characterized by distributed discovery, where media organizations still create content, but people access it through channels provided by platform products and services like search engines, social media, and news aggregators. Many empirical studies find that using Facebook and Twitter forces people to use different news sources, but in practice, most follow three or four news sources routinely. Journalism in the digital era loses audiences' attention, but in the worst scenario, it loses public trust. These trust issues are tied in with partisan political attacks on independent journalism, as well as with widespread concern in much of the world where many

² This quoted source was requested from speakers and visited professors, in the Global Business Journalism program at Tsinghua University

feel outside economic and political interests unduly influence news media. Today, journalists are forced to work on various topics, constantly in the race against time, but to some extent, it makes them know less and less about the problems they write about. So, the news is more diverse and the new generation of journalists needs more education and new skills.

However, nowadays, it is more important to visualize and put the text in relation to video. A new challenge for today's journalists is that they are 24/7 online and produce news rapidly, first on the media's website, then maybe on Twitter. They must concentrate on "why" in the story, provide the analysis and context, and focus on the audience's attention. It is vital to give information that is correct in writing and pleasant but is very interesting and informative. So, nobody could be a good journalist if he/she is not curious. To tell stories, nowadays, journalists use social media, and they are omnipresent. Social media can be used to find analyses, information, and other things, but they have bad sides too, such as spreading fake news.

In the end, even with all this technological progress, journalists must remember the first rule from the "old school" - that news always must be accurate and fair and consider fundamental ethical values.

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