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RESEARCH ARTICLE

EQUILIBRIUM IN TECHNICAL WRITING: HARMONIZING OBJECTIVITY WITH ADVOCACY

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Abstract

The task of editing is strenuous, and the most challenging one is to reach the target goals within the time limitation. Equilibrium is the stage of finding a balance between two opposite things. In this research piece, the standpoint of an editor will be analyzed from the perspective of objectivity and advocacy. The fact cannot be denied that editors (many of them) spend an extensive time only to rectify the issues related to lexicon. However, painfully true, many of them overlook the rhythm of balancing act, and only for that lethargic activity, they face a challenging situation to reach the laudable phase. The goal of this research task is to help the future editors and the technical writers to connect the eclectic issues related to the balancing act.

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Introduction: -

Editors aggrandize the social, cultural, and academic standards while improving content quality. However, at the time of editing, they must be cautious. It is said that editors do harm in two ways: they edit where it is not needed, and they fail to edit where it is needed (Saller, 2016).

In this research piece, the tasks of an editor will be shown by a syllogistic cycle where the significant notes related to neutral tone, facts and opinion will be given priority in discussion. Besides this, ethical and legal standards will be considered analytically at the argumentative portion of check and balance. Brooks, et al (2022) in "Macro Editing for Legality, Ethics and Propriety" exposed the point strongly that identifying any gaps of information or argumentation determines the flow of editing logically. The point must be noted that special attention to the overall structure and organization fortifies the task of editing magnificently. A review on the academic and economic interests will also be highlighted here from a logical standpoint. The fact cannot be denied that to get validity and reliability, fact checking is crucial. J. Angelo Corlett emphasized the significance of fact checking and peer-review process in a splendid way. The issues related to fact-checking will be considered here during the discussion. Corlett (2008) in "The Ethics of Academic Journal Editing" raised the urgency of peer review process and the ways of managing conflict of interest with evidence. According to his view, editors must embrace peer review process to establish a trusted form because this act will not only keep a momentous contribution in managing the timeline but also fill the gaps of writing in a constructive way. The core objective of this research piece is to highlight the summit points of editing and to make a bridge between advocacy and objectivity in technical writing.

Literature Review:-

The alacrity of an author plays an important role in clarifying the ambiguous portion. Interaction of the peer review process also keeps a momentous contribution in this process.

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The fact must be acknowledged that ambivalent attitude of the author or the amalgamation nature of the editor may bring a blunder in a digressive way (Davison, 2024). From this perspective, a note of dissent is necessary to explicate the equivocal issues. Proper communication and understanding are essential in this process. In “Ethics III: The ethics of editing”, Davison emphasized the note also that editors should identify the gaps as well as they should seek suggestion at the dubious portion by a peer-review process. However, respectful approaches should be maintained towards the author's voice because due to gap of proper communication and understanding, a few editors find the task challenging and later they misinterpret their observation in incongruous way.

Steve Dunham (2014) said that the fervor of an editor lying in humility that is attached to book's audience and author's intentions. He is ebullient to magnify the importance of content and focus. Dunham in “The Editor's Companion: An Indispensable Guide to Editing Books, Magazines, Online Publications, and More” shared the exigent note that content, focus, and language are the exigent spirits in editing. If we imagine editing as a flower then clarity, consistency, correctness, and confidentiality will be the petals and essence of it. Amy Einsohn (2011) gave priority towards the phases of confidentiality and consistency. In the book *The Copyeditor's Handbook: A Guide for book Publishing and Corporate Communications*, Einsohn delineates the viewpoint strongly that to keep a balance, an editor should act as the author's second pair of eyes. Confidentiality of the unpublished works and sensitive information during the editing process should be highly valued and respected. The main goal of an editor here is to ensure that the content is clear, compelling, and well-structured.

Peter Ginna (2017) accepted and accelerated this conception in the book *What Editors Do*. Here, he gathers essays from twenty-seven leading figures and reveals the information regarding their work, editing phase and book publishing portion in an elucidating way. The notion related to objectivity and advocacy is highly valued and appreciated by famous editors and writer. It cannot be denied that a bridge between objectivity and advocacy reduces the ambiguities in an intelligible way. To clarify the ambivalent issues, the penetrating criterion of an editor is to take necessary steps for verifying the information that is related to evidence and statistics. The issue cannot be retracted that for establishing a credible report, fact checking is a significant phase. If the tone and style are not appropriate for the intended audience, an editor always represents the information by highlighting the gap to the author judiciously. Susan L. Greenberg (2015) in *Editors Talk about Editing: Insights for Readers, Writers, and Publishers* brought a fantabulous exposition related to this phase. In this book, the author, a former editor herself, interviewed practitioners at the top of their game from newspapers, magazines, broadcast news, book publishing, scholarly editing to academic publishing, and digital curation. The interviewees thought aloud about creativity and human judgment; what they had in common and what made them different. Her critical observation related to writing, editing, and publishing is embellished here from the perspective of reality. To bring the issues related to objectivity and approval, Judd Karen (2001) in *Copyediting: A Practical Guide*, prioritized and manifested exigent notes related to diligence, diversification, persistence, financial acumen, and project management. Karen also amplified the importance of proofreading, punctuation, grammar, and style. George A. Lozano (2014) on the other hand enumerated and itemized the importance of building a trustworthy relationship between statistical analyses, re-writing, and co-writing in “Ethics of using language editing services in an era of digital communication and heavily multiauthored papers”. According to Lozano, a discussion related to peer-reviewing process, proposal preparation, collaboration, and statistical analyses is crucially. To keep a balanced approach between objectivity and advocacy, Shaw (2018) in “Gatekeepers of Reward: A Pilot Study on the Ethics of Editing and Competing Evaluations of Value” manifested the significance of accountability and credibility. Misinformation leads to reputational decline; it is mentionable that inaccurate information damages trust and undermines the source's validity and credibility. Here, an editor's responsibility of fact checking is strongly connected to the principles of integrity and accountability. Before submitting the final draft, they must navigate potential conflicts of interest and discuss the issues with authors, reviewers, and editorial board members. Presenting information in a fair and balanced way from multiple perspectives will not only raise credibility but also escalate the core values of the writing. Saller (2016) in *The Subversive Copy Editor: Advice from Chicago* expanded information for writers on formatting manuscripts for publication. She also shared strong points regarding the dangers of allegiance to outdated grammar and style rules as well as exposed the ways to stay current in language and technology. The marvelous part of the discussion is related to first and second part: Working with the Writer, for the Reader and Working with Your Colleague and with Yourself (for its judicious expressions, and evidence). The sterling standpoints regarding the expectations of the audience are momentous with evidence from the perspective of reality. Besides this, argumentative portion of the chapter twelve “Things We Haven't Learned Yet: Keeping Up Professionally” is special here for upholding the core issues related to the target and patient-oriented goals.

Analysis and Discussion: -

Accuracy, clarity, and consistency are the fundamental principles of the editing process. By prioritizing the principles, an editor assists the author to produce a majestic work. The fact cannot be denied that ethical standards of writing and editing are pivotal for maintaining authenticity and acceptability. Besides this, logical coherence and cohesion should be maintained in exposing the information because the prime concern of the ethical editors is not only to avoid misleading tactics or deceptive information but also to follow a specific pattern at the time of embellishing the information.

For getting credibility, adding value, and maintaining ethical standard, editors of the balanced approach always separate facts from opinion. A neutral voice is essential here to avoid personal biases and to rectify the information properly.

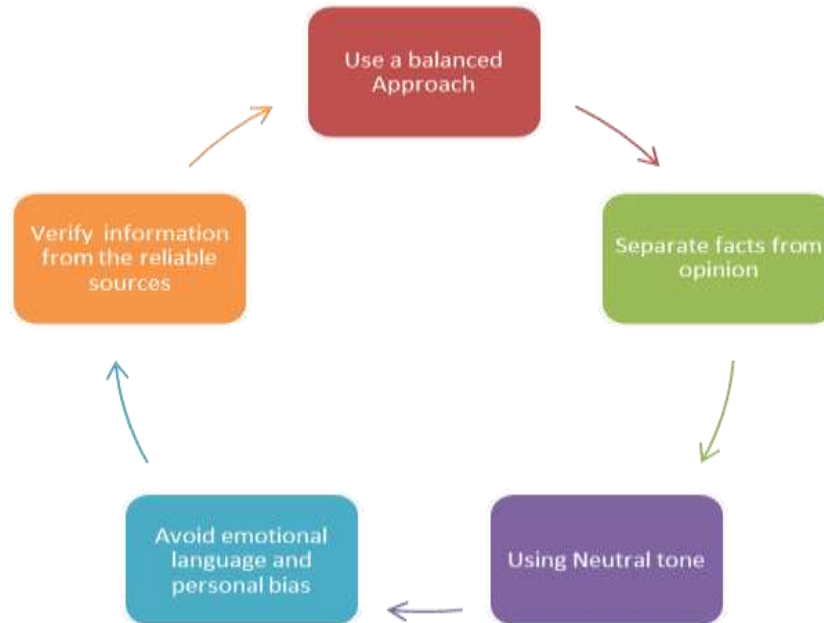


Fig 1: - Syllogistic cycle of the balance approach.

In this balanced approach, trustworthiness, and authenticity are aligned with the issues of fact checking and verifying information. At this stage, editors expose the notes logically and objectively by preserving a balanced relationship between expectations of the audience and the author. Nevertheless, editors uphold the report by respecting intellectual property rights (with proper attributing sources) and by avoiding plagiarism. The fair and impartial treatment of the ethical editors towards the facts not only raises value here but also creates a long-lasting impression among the audience.

It is also mentionable that by protecting patient and target oriented goals and by keeping a specific roadmap, an editor of the balanced approach accomplishes the assigned tasks timely with strenuous effort and labor as they are confined not only by time but also by commitment. At the very beginning, editors identify unique ideas, patient-oriented and target-oriented goals. To accelerate academic and economic interests, they also make a comparative analysis with logic and evidence. Proper respect towards individual's privacy rights is maintained here conscientiously. Furthermore, at the time of exposing information, they maintain objective perspective. The word "Objectivity" means freedom from bias. Here, the ethics of an editor is to make a bridge between expectations and reality from a neutral standpoint. The fact must be remembered that revealing sensitive or confidential information without proper consent harms individuals and violates ethical standards. In this balanced approach, ethical editors are also mindful of diverse perspectives and sensitivities.

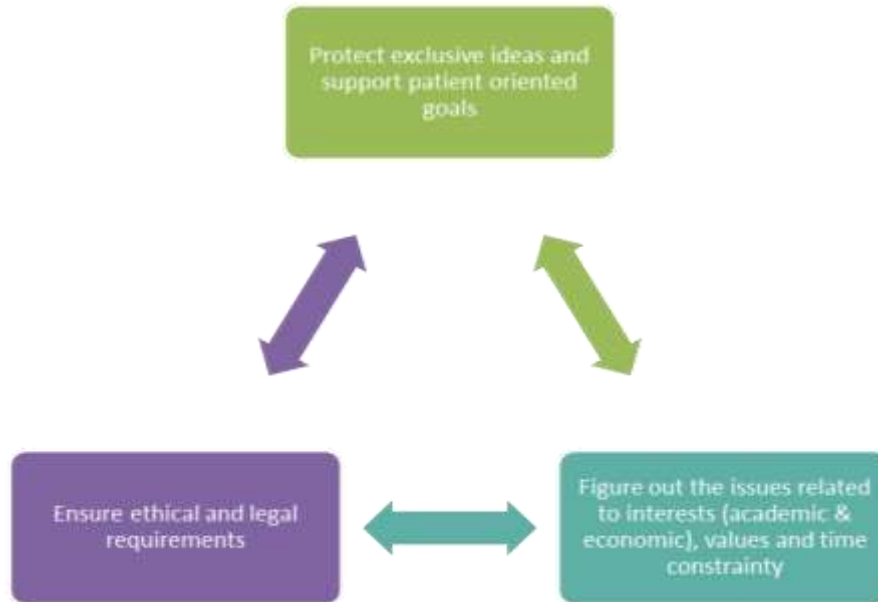


Fig 2: - Check and balance issues.

In this approach, after identifying patient and target oriented goals, editors give priority to academic and economic values. Editors’ accumulation of information and preparation related to the potential conflicts of interest or biases (that may influence their work) support both the writer and the publisher to present the task logically. For building trust and allowing readers to evaluate information critically, editors give special considerations on a few issues (e.g. a prior plan towards the patient and target goals, legal issues, justification towards the perception and capacity from the perspective of the national and global business). By maintaining transparency, and considering the expectations of the audience, and integrating objective evidence (with persuasive arguments), editors of the balanced approach play an effective role here.

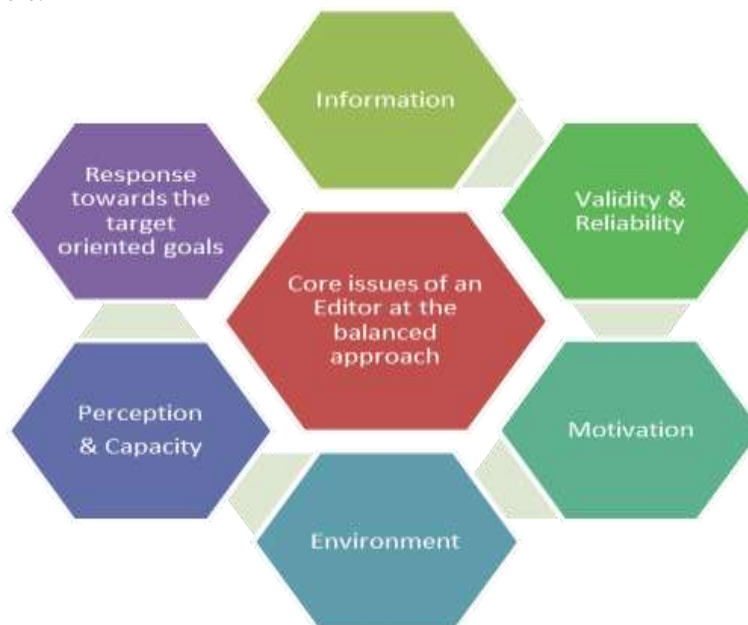


Fig3: - Editor’s core of attention in the balanced approach.

The editor’ core of attention towards the issues is centered and furnished not only by content or style but also by environment. After collecting the information, the role of an editor is to validate the information from the reliable sources.

To reach the patient and target oriented goals, an editor of the balanced approach always keeps a clear roadmap regarding the time frame, aims, objectives, contents, and capacities. Here, different types of environments are also taken into consideration (e.g. social, cultural, technological, legal, economic, and demographic environment). Fact checking, statistics, expert opinions, and real-life examples are resolutely joined to intensify the eminence and reliability. Ethical editors recognize their responsibility to society and strive to contribute positively to public discourse. It is noteworthy that they assess manuscripts to determine their quality, marketability, and suitability for publication. They also look for strengths and weaknesses in plot, characterization, and writing style. In this balanced approach, feedback of the editors on structure and character development assists authors to upgrade the overall effectiveness of their work. The astounding point is that consideration regarding the demographic environment (e.g. sex, income, age, educational level, occupation of the target audience) supports an editor of the balanced approach to fill the gaps and to reach the target goals strongly.

In the balanced approach, editors focus not only on grammatical issues or punctuation but also keep an egalitarian outlook from the perspective of national and global business. Here, appropriate adjustments to maintain propriety from the perspective of cultural and social contexts are pivotally important because macro editing process enhances the readability and coherence level of a piece as well as ensures the rights and dignity of individuals. Brooks, et al (2022), in "Macro Editing for Legality, Ethics and Propriety" delineated the note strongly that steady act and proper plan on social, legal, and ethical issues assist an editor to obtain success satisfactorily. In this balanced approach, the magnanimous responsibility of an editor is to view and confirm the validity of facts, statistics, and references that are cited by the author. Nevertheless, the point is noteworthy that editor's enforce adherence to the publisher's style guide or industry standards to ensure consistency in language usage, formatting, and citation style throughout the manuscript is also munificent here.

Besides the analysis of the content, editors of the balanced approach embellish the information to the author regarding the market trends, reader preferences, and competitive titles in a comprehensive way. They also assess the commercial potential of manuscripts and provide strategic input to maximize the book's chances of success in the marketplace.

Ginna (2017) exposed the note that effective editors bring three main assets to bear- subject expertise: to ensure that they see where an author is coming from; market knowledge: to allow them to understand the interests and needs of a book's target audience; and the tenacity and tact: to hash out solutions when an author's preferences and the market needs are in conflict.

Constructive criticism and suggestions are important for the improvement; however, the editors of the balanced standpoint always keep respect towards the author's unique voice and vision. At the time of editing, they ensure that all facts, figures, and information presented in the text are correct and supported logically by reliable sources. An egalitarian attitude of the editors towards reference and publishing magnifies fairness, equity, and inclusivity. Borel (2016) in *The Chicago Guide to Fact-checking* emphasized the point strongly that the editor should justify the facts and information with reliable data and evidence. In an era of misinformation and fake news; verifying fact helps to combat the spread of falsehoods as well as ensures that readers receive factually true information.

Conclusion:-

Ethics in editing serve as a guiding principle to uphold the integrity, credibility, and responsibility. By engaging with people who have distinct cultures, backgrounds, and viewpoints; editors of the balanced approach receive a broader understanding level of thoughts, skills, and open-mindedness attitude. Here, the editors review the text to identify the mistakes/gaps as well as assist the author to prevail success in a uniform way. Peer review process and collaboration also play a vital role to reach the tombstone of success. It is mentionable that in this process proper plans related to the target and patient-oriented goals (on the points related to timeframe, capacity, content, demographic environment, and review process) support the editors of the balanced approach strongly behind the screen. By embracing diversity, editors in this approach understand the market and communities grandly.

Mountainous labor, effort, and patience are especially required in the balanced act of editing. From my perspective, to reach the target goals, sufficient time and special consideration should be given at the time of editing because it will improve the quality and validate the task of editing in a persistent way.

Editor's fair, transparent and inclusive standpoint is mandatory in this process. The note must be remembered that an editor should be vigilant in identifying and addressing issues of misconduct (such as data fabrication or falsification, authorship disputes, or conflicts of interest). Above all, the balanced act of editing will be beneficial not only to save time but also to raise academic, economic, and cultural value of technical writing in a loyal and flexible way.

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