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Social media and its influence in everyday journalistic practices

Arpita Gupta

Dr. Meenakshi Singh

Abstract---Social media is an important tool for sharing and exchanging information but the advancement of the mobile technologies and messaging apps brings an opportunity to reporters for newsgatherings. Social media as an activity has brought about an aspect of user generated content (UGC) and user driven content. User driven content is where all content is produced by the user. Social media brings new social interactions among people and can be an effective marketing tool for journalists to share their materials. Social media works as a centralized tool for gathering information, but on the other hand, it would be a big communicational blander when professionals are not able to use it properly.

Keywords---social media, influence, journalistic practices.

Introduction



Importance of social media

Social Media is an important tool for sharing and exchanging information but the advancement of the mobile technologies and messaging apps brings an opportunity to reporters for newsgatherings. Social media as an activity has brought about an aspect of user generated content (UGC) and user driven content. User driven content is where all content is produced by the user. Social media brings new social interactions among people and can be an effective marketing tool for journalists to share their materials. Social media works as a centralized tool for gathering information, but on the other hand, it would be a big communicational blander when professionals are not able to use it properly. According to a paper “Citing your sources: How community journalists use social media for story content generation” by Jared Charles Meisinger (2018), social media has become an imperative mechanism for news gathering, distribution, and audience engagement, the role of social media journalists has grown rapidly. The main advantage of using social media is to use it as a source for story leads and references. Also, these social networking sites provided with the latest news and stories that are quicker than any news on television and newspapers. In an article “Social media has Central Role in our Newsgatherings”,_Steve Myers (2010) say that social media plays a central role in our newsgatherings. Journalists are constantly active on social networking sites building sources and monitoring trends. He further added that everyday stories buzz and rumours emerge on social networks and editors make judgement calls on what merits further reporting.

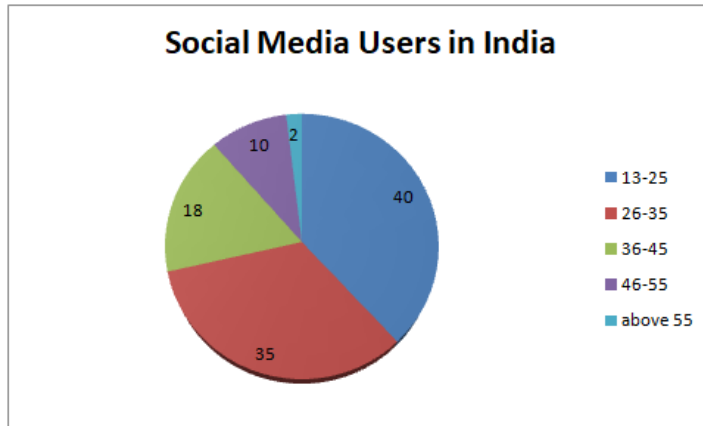


Figure 1. Social media users in India

Importance of Journalists in using social media

Social media has drastically changed the way journalists do their jobs from changing the way they perceive information and story leads to shifting how they share their stories. According to Reece (2009b), social networking has an important role to play in journalism as it serves as a source of news and information. Constant feedback from the audience through these networks' interactive functions is also a boon to journalism. According to an Article “Facebook woos Journalist with news gathering tool” (2018) the giant social

networking site Facebook has released a new tool “signal” to help journalists find, organise and publish their content from Facebook and Instagram. Journalists find this tool to be more fascinating and more vital for their news gatherings with relevant photos, videos, trends, posts that they can use in their storytelling and reporting. These groups of tools help the working reports and journalists to find out behind the scene and know about what is trending on Facebook and Instagram these days. In an article titled “How Journalists Gather and report the news has changed”. McNamara reports that Twitter and Facebook often help in finding local and international stories.

Social media has also changed the way journalists and news centres distribute their news. Social media has become a new platform which is useful for both people and journalists as it shows the latest trends of news being discussed and that helps journalists to make a decision about stories to be covered. Twitter and Facebook are the two social networking sites that indeed changed the way of sharing and collecting information. Many social media users use hashtags that help journalists find out the topic being talked about. Some of the major reasons that influence social media for regular journalistic practices are the rapid expansion in the country's middle class. Social media has broken the media stereotypes and has become the biggest shift and one of the most popular and effective mediums of mass communication (2017). Exploring social media revolution – the new digital frontiers of Journalism (2017) Social Media adoption among Internet users in India is around 84%. Social media users in India are very young compared to the rest of the nations in the world. Like news, social media has become an integral modern method of communicating with one another (Kaplan and Haenlein 2012). In fact, it could be argued that social media itself is a form of broadcasting news, albeit a particularly technologically advanced one (Poell and Borra 2011) given the ever-developing platforms and tools that users are able to employ.

What is telling about social media, as a phenomenon, is its effect on traditional ways of broadcasting news across all manner of mediums. On television news, presenters will often end a segment on a particular subject by reading out certain comments obtained from Twitter from viewers. In newspapers, readers will be encouraged to offer their comments through a certain social media channel on certain hot topics, with such comments appearing as part of another day's news story. And online, many news articles have links and logos to share stories on a particular social network site, as well as a box to comment on the story above, so that to some extent the hundreds of people's comments may appear as a continuation of the news story itself.

The use of social media by working Journalists

With the increase in popularity of social media, Twitter has become a powerful tool among reporters and news organisations. Twitter has become a tool that enables its users to share real-time updates about what they have experienced. Audiences are no longer waiting for news anchors or newspapers for updated news; they're on Twitter and Facebook scrolling through contents and sharing stories with their friends and family before even being picked up by any reporter. This in turn attracted the journalists to the social media platform, increasing their use.

as a tool for story lead and to stay aware about is going on in the world. Social media, has extended news publishing to the street, giving the common man enough scope to share ideas and opinion with others. Muck Rack in his blog explained that roughly there are 6,000 tweets shared per second on twitter. Therefore, With the active use of social media by many people, journalists find it an effective tool for sharing and communicating breaking news so that it stays in the news cycle for as long as possible. Also, according to Muck Rack's 2017 survey, 70 percent of the journalists consider twitter as the most valuable site on social media and 72 percent track the number of times their news stories shared on social media. Globally there are increasing number of readers consuming news through social media sites like Facebook and twitter. Due to the changed behaviour of people many news organisations are broadcasting their content through social media such as You-tube, twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

The Impact Of Social Media On Professional Journalism Practices

Social Media in many ways has changed the style of reporting with the conventional media alive with the fact that people are playing a big role as sources of news and news censors. Choi (2018), in the study after interviewing journalists who are who are part of the newsrooms, said that technological changes would compromise the quality of news. According to Steensen (2011), social media and internet have only contributed by providing news from different resources in a quickest way. Previously, news which was restricted to limited stories, hourly broadcast and morning newspapers is now available on a single mouse click. According to Steensen (2011), social media and internet have only contributed by providing news from different resources in a quickest way. Earlier news that were restricted to limited stories in newspapers and television is now just available in a single click. Social media has brought a change in the journalist's perception about their job role and their routine job pattern. The role of journalists that previously had a different way of collecting and gathering information with promoting their work has seen a significant shift.

The impact of Social media on journalism has many pros and cons. Social media has changed the way of gathering news due to its digital nature, thus contrasts with traditional journalism routines, which induce reporters to roam the streets in search of news without adequate communication devices for networking and direction. With the availability of smartphones, laptops, tablets, it has now become convenient or media practitioners to gather and disseminate news. Similarly, the publishing of news items has become easier and convenient with the availability of emails, Facebook, Twitter, and You-tube. Social media has totally changed the dynamics of traditional journalist by allowing everyone to share his information or opinion through using a global sharing system. Therefore, internet can be flooded with "fake news" and social media is where one can find mostly fake articles. There are endless twitter, Facebook and Instagram users who share fake news. Most of the people are using social media these days and is open to anybody that can publish whatever they want to publish. However, these shortcomings of the new media have made journalists vigilant and critical when reporting the news. Journalists are now careful not to fall for the unprofessional contents of bloggers and citizen journalists.

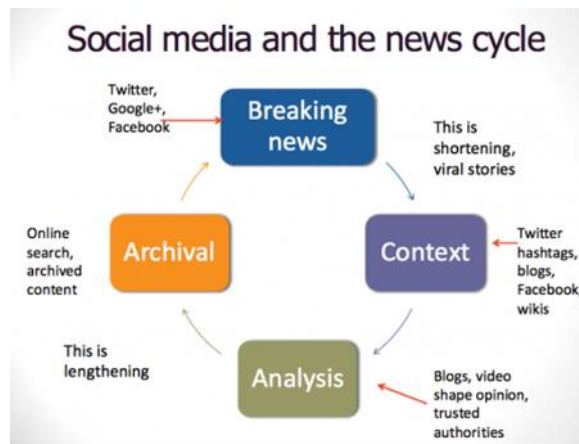


Figure 6. Social Media and the New Cycle

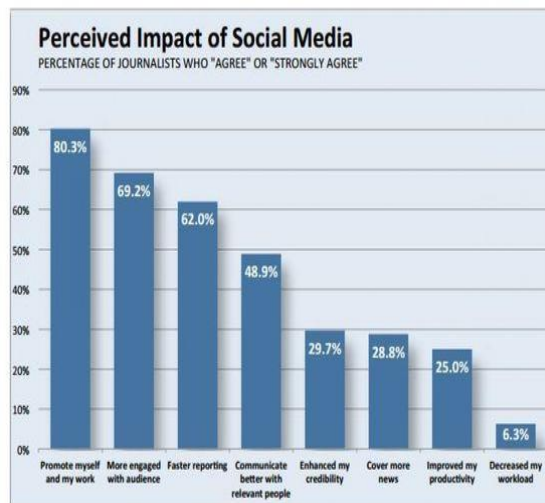


Figure 2. The Percentage of Impact of Social media among journalists

Issues and Challenges of Social Media in Journalism

In today's age of professional journalism, Journalists share the Social Media domain with Twitter, blogs and avid social media users. While many news organisations and media companies themselves encourage their reporters to use social media for gathering information. An article about "Do journalists need Social media Guidelines" (2018) Ryan Guerrero explains that expressing opinions, promoting political views, endorsing candidates, making offensive comments, online comments, tweets or posts can put a reporter in the negative spotlight. Therefore, with this in mind, the ethical challenge is to develop social media guidelines that allow reporters to explore the social media world, and also make reasonable limits on personal commentary. Social media these days plays the most reliable and crucial role in journalism today. Guidelines as such are important in integrating journalism with social media in today's age of media. The rising

influence of social media and in journalism among people is what exactly made media companies to continue with the guidelines and rules for the journalists.

These guidelines are the easiest and the most reliable way of using social media intelligently without harming they're or the organisations reputations. Journalists too must have respect and for the people and their content and also remember that the sources are not only materials but are human being too. Also, our words have a great impact not to ourselves but also to our colleagues and public. The ethical issues of social media can be fixed, and it is currently on its way to developing journalism further. Social media guidelines are here to help us become better journalists and citizen in the world.

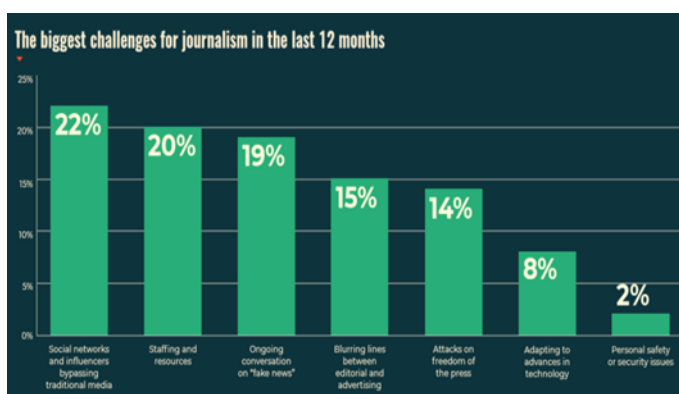


Figure 8. Biggest challenges to journalism globally in 2018, according to cision state of the Media report 2019

Perception of Journalists about social media

Conventionally, the credibility of news has been highlighted with trustworthiness and expertise. With the rise of social media in presenting news people now expect to access news immediately with constant updates of news. The availability of online websites and social networking sites have changed the way journalists work and practice which also means that social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and You-tube are increasingly being used as a source and a way to publish the news by the people. Furthermore, journalists must check and verify information and evaluate the posts that published on Social media sites before they use it. The demand for new stories has altered the traditional way to obtain and display information. The perception and desire of users for real-time updates have encouraged journalists to develop their roles in such cases. It is very well known that social networking sites are providing an additional layer of information to existing news sources.

Undoubtedly, the social media has changed how journalists work, sending and receiving news. Technology has helped journalist an alternative way in news gatherings that can also helped them to collect source and more materials news stories and has provided them access to a wider range of public journalism that are able to tell their own stories and opinions on respective issues and news. According to Amjad Omar Safori (2016), study that Journalists are the professional who find it beneficial and do news follow ups such news and avenues of information to support their work. Social networking sites are not a news sites

but now has become a source for many people today. Anybody can post anything on the social media and people tend to believe what they see on these sites. Therefore, it is worrying phenomenon that if a journalist, for instance, tends to rely on Facebook and Twitter for his source of news without verifying, this could be misleading and troubling phenomenon. Journalists work on the review of people and pages, and pages of news sites, local and international newspapers, to know the latest news and details about a specific issue and to get the new ideas for the writing or construction of a story. Many Journalists choose social media with the perception that it will offer a faster alternative way to distribute their news content. Journalist use social networking sites, and applications to communicate with others, and to publish more details separately from the news, as these sites and applications are a wide space to express opinions and publish information. The problem that the journalist face at the adoption of information where people post without reliable sources, or comments on the news that this information may with the clarification that this information may be published as a personal opinion, or incomplete information, or aimed at people from which to raise the issue and attract attention. Pearson, 2007; Tang and Liu, (2015) explains that the journalist to be sure about the news and the information obtained from social networking sites before publishing on newspapers or showing on television or posting on any social media sites as there are many sources that spread fake news and rumours to stir up public opinion that can cause problems for journalists.

Social Media Reflects the Reality

It has now become common for journalists to point to social media posts specifically tweets and facebook posts as an indicator of what people are talking about. Twitter is a modern version of person-on-the-street interviews, or even a journalistic stand-in for actual polling. Twitter which is the most popular platform for U.S. journalists and the most popular for studies of journalism on social media, is demonstrably not representative of the public. Journalists use more user content and accurate representation of reality.