



Social Networks and The News Function

An Analytical Reading of The Context and Concepts

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Abstract

This research paper discusses the importance of social media in spreading news and information, and the opportunities that these platforms provide for journalists, activists, and ordinary citizens to exchange news and information. The article also highlights the challenges and issues facing news on digital media, including issues related to the health and credibility of published news and information. Additionally, we will attempt to identify the role of social media in raising awareness, education, and interaction with the audience, as well as the challenges facing press freedom and human rights, especially in the presence of a revolution that solidified the professionalism and existence of these platforms. The article also illustrates the efforts made to ensure the quality of content and achieve credibility and transparency in the media, as well as the new technologies that help correct misleading information and contribute to ensuring the accuracy of published news and information. Finally, the article explores the future challenges that may face news functions on social media, including technological changes, social and political transformations

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1. Introduction

Social media platforms have become one of the most popular sources of news and information for people around the world. With the rise of citizen journalism and the ease of sharing information online, social media has transformed the way we consume and share news. The news functions of social media have opened up new opportunities for journalists, activists, and ordinary citizens to report on events and issues in real-time and reach a global audience. However, the news functions of social media are not without problems and challenges. They face issues related to the accuracy and credibility of news, as anyone can publish news and information without fact-checking it, which can lead to the spread of fake and misleading news. Additionally, the news functions of social media face challenges related to press freedom and human rights, as journalists and activists may be persecuted and arrested for sharing information and news through social media. Therefore, the news functions of social media present a continuous challenge for journalism and media. It requires serious efforts to improve the quality of content and achieve credibility and transparency in media work, as well as cautious handling of information published on social media platforms.

.1- The Importance of Social Media in Spreading News and Information:

In modern times, social media has become a primary source for spreading news and information. Through these platforms, individuals can access the latest news and updates in various fields, including politics, economics, culture, technology, and more.

Thanks to social media, individuals can exchange information quickly and efficiently, whether they are sharing information about themselves or important events happening around the world. Furthermore, social media allows individuals to express their opinions and share their perspectives on current events (Mitchell and other, 2020)

Another positive aspect of social media in spreading news and information is its availability to users at any time and from any place, making access to up-to-date information easy and convenient. Social media also serves as an important source for covering major events that may be difficult to fully cover by traditional media outlets.

However, we must remember that there are some negative aspects to using social media in spreading news and information, as these platforms can be a source of unverified or misleading news, known as "fake news." Therefore, it is important to always verify the accuracy and credibility of information before sharing it. Social media is one of the most important means used to spread news and information today, for several reasons, including:

- **Speed:** News and information can be published on social media instantly and very quickly, allowing information to be disseminated quickly and without significant delays.
- **Access to a wide audience:** Social media is a means of communicating with a large audience of people around the world, making it ideal for disseminating information widely and diversely.

- **Transparency:** Anyone can publish news and information on social media, making it a transparent means of disseminating information quickly and accurately.
- **Interactivity:** Social media allows users to interact with content and comment on it, allowing users to exchange ideas and opinions on the topics that have been posted.
- **Reliability:** Social media is an important source of news and information for people today, making it an important means of disseminating and promoting various content (Hong and Zhao, 2020).

Therefore, it can be said that social media plays a major role in disseminating news and information today, and is an important means of communication and interaction between individuals and communities around the world.

2- Challenges and problems facing social media news functions:

In recent years, social media has become a significant source for disseminating news and information. While this approach can offer many benefits, it also faces increasing challenges and problems. One of the primary challenges facing social media news is the phenomenon of fake news, where inaccurate or misleading information is widely circulated, making it difficult for users to distinguish between accurate and false information. Social media news also suffers from the problem of excessive focus on likes and shares, which can lead to the dissemination of false or misleading information aimed at attracting a larger audience (Hermida, 2010).

Other challenges facing social media news include media bias and imbalance in news coverage, weak content oversight and monitoring, and complexities related to protecting the privacy and personal data of users. Improving the quality of news and information on social media requires strengthening content oversight and monitoring, encouraging users to verify information accuracy before sharing it, and providing more support and training for journalists and editors working on these platforms.

Social media news functions face many challenges and problems that they must deal with. Among these challenges and problems are:

- **The challenge of verifying information:** Journalists and editors face the challenge of verifying the accuracy of the information that is circulated on social media, as a lot of fake news and misleading information is spread on these platforms.
- **The challenge of time:** Journalists and editors must deal with social media quickly and efficiently, as news on these platforms spreads quickly and must be responded to quickly before the opportunity is missed.
- **The challenge of fairness and balance:** Social media has the ability to influence public opinion, and this requires journalists and editors to strive to provide fair and balanced media coverage of events and topics.
- **The challenge of privacy and security:** Journalists and editors must adhere to privacy and security

standards when dealing with social media, as personal and sensitive information is at risk of leaking or being hacked.

- **The challenge of negative comments:** Journalists and editors face negative and hostile comments on their content, and they must deal with these comments carefully and correct any errors in the content (Theocharis and other, 2010).

In general, the work of journalists and editors requires the use of critical thinking, good judgment, and responsible reporting when dealing with social media news functions.

3- Opportunities provided by social media for journalists, activists, and ordinary citizens to spread news and information:

Social media provides various opportunities for journalists, activists, and ordinary citizens to spread news and information and achieve social impact and change. These opportunities include rapid dissemination of important news and information, reaching a wider audience, engaging with the audience, transitioning to citizen journalism, and advocating for social change. Journalists, activists, and ordinary citizens can quickly disseminate important news and information on social media, allowing them to interact with the audience and draw attention to important issues. This can lead to reaching a wider audience, including people who may not have previously followed them regularly (Mensing, 2011).

Social media allows for interacting with the audience, which is valuable for obtaining feedback, comments, and opinions

on the news and information published. This engagement also includes citizen journalism, where ordinary citizens who use social media actively can become sources of news and information, covering important events and analyzing them independently. social media can be used to advocate for social change, allowing journalists, activists, and ordinary citizens to spread messages and encourage people to act. Overall, social media offers significant opportunities for spreading news and information, reaching a wider audience, and promoting social change (Messner and Lara ,2011).

3-1 The Role of Social Media in Awareness, Education, And Interaction with The Public:

Social media plays an important role in raising awareness, education, and interaction with the public. The use of social media is an effective way to deliver information and educate people about various issues. Individuals and organizations can use social media to communicate with the public and provide educational and informative content that can benefit individuals. Social media can help educate people about important issues such as health, the environment, culture, and science. For example, individuals and organizations can share important and useful news and information with the community through social media sites, as well as provide analytical reports and educational articles. In addition, social media can help interact with the public and engage in dialogue with them, where individuals and organizations can provide content that stimulates discussion and engages the audience. The public can also express their opinions, share their

experiences, and ask questions (Shao and other,2017).

Overall, social media plays an important role in promoting awareness, education, and interaction with the public on various issues and topics. By fully utilizing these tools, awareness, education, and interaction can be strengthened, ultimately achieving the desired goals.

4- The Problems Related to The Health and Credibility of News and Information Published on Social Media:

the use of social media platforms for sharing news and information has increased significantly, posing numerous challenges and issues, particularly those related to the health and credibility of the published content. There are growing concerns about the widespread dissemination of fake news or "fake news" on social media platforms, which is often shared widely without verifying its accuracy or credibility. This problem represents a major challenge to the health and credibility of published news, and increases the risks of disseminating inaccurate and misleading information (Allcott and Gentzkow, 2017)

Other issues related to the health and credibility of news and information published on social media platforms include inadequate content supervision and monitoring, weak verification of information and sources, media bias and imbalance in news coverage, as well as difficulties related to protecting user privacy and personal data. Ensuring the health and credibility of news and information published on social media platforms requires strengthening content supervision and monitoring, encouraging users to verify the accuracy and credibility of information

before sharing it, providing more support and training for journalists and editors working on these platforms, and working to provide standards and tools for verifying the accuracy and credibility of published content (McGregor and Johannes, 2019).

The issue of the health and credibility of news and information published on social media is one of the most important challenges facing the digital society at present. To deal with this problem, some necessary measures can be taken by both users and digital platforms. These measures include:

- **Verifying the source of the news:** It is always important to verify the source of the news before sharing it, even if the information seems trustworthy. Search engines can be used to verify the accuracy of the news.
- **Checking the publication date:** It is necessary to check the publication date to ensure that the digital platform is not reposting an old news article instead of the latest news.
- **Verifying the credibility of the website:** It is important to verify the credibility of the website that publishes the news, even if the website appears to be trustworthy. Search engines can be used to check ratings of the website by users and experts.
- **Avoiding reposting questionable information:** It is important to avoid reposting information that is questionable in its accuracy, even if it appears attractive or interesting.

- **Monitoring reliable sources of news and information:** It is important to monitor reliable and accredited sources of news and information regularly to keep up with the latest developments.
- **Verifying the credibility of social media accounts:** It is important to verify the credibility of the person's account who is posting the news before sharing it by checking their verification status, number of followers, or engagement levels

4-1 Challenges facing press freedom and human rights:

Journalists and activists face a number of challenges when it comes to press freedom and human rights, including:

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5-The Efforts Made to The Quality of Content and Achieve Credibility and Transparency in Media:

The media plays an important role in shaping public opinion and directing discussions and debates in society. However, in recent years, there has been growing concern about the quality of content published in the media and its accuracy and transparency. Many efforts and initiatives are working to achieve content quality and enhance credibility and transparency in the media. These efforts include strengthening

professional ethics for journalists and media professionals, enhancing independence and freedom in media reports, and working to develop standards and tools to achieve credibility and transparency in content.

Content quality also requires improving the number of qualified journalists and reporters and providing the necessary resources to produce high-quality content. This includes providing the necessary support for media institutions and enhancing sustainable funding for them (Messner and Lara ,2011).

In the end, content quality and achieving credibility and transparency are critical issues in the media, requiring continuous cooperation and multiple efforts from journalists, media professionals, media institutions, and the public.

Analyzing the efforts made to improve the quality of content and achieve credibility and transparency in media work requires several factors. These factors include:

- **Adhering to journalistic ethics and standards:** The media should adhere to the highest ethical and professional standards to ensure the accuracy and impartiality of the content they produce.
- **Verification of information:** Media professionals should verify the accuracy of the information they report and ensure that it comes from reliable sources.
- **Transparency in reporting:** The media should be transparent about their sources and methods of obtaining information, as well as disclosing any potential conflicts of interest.

- **Engaging with the audience:** Media professionals should engage with their audience to understand their needs and provide content that is relevant and beneficial to them. This can be achieved through social media platforms, websites, live responses, and more.
- **Continuous training and development:** Media professionals should continuously update and improve their skills in researching, verifying information, and editing content objectively and professionally to achieve credibility and transparency in their work (Messner and Lara ,2011).
- **Rethinking the business model:** Financial pressures on the media, such as the need to attract advertisements, subscriptions, and contributions, can affect the quality of content and the ability to achieve credibility and transparency in media work. It may be necessary to reconsider the business model to achieve the goals of quality, credibility, and transparency in media work without compromising profitability and financial sustainability.

Improving the quality of content and achieving credibility and transparency in media work requires continuous and sustained efforts from all stakeholders, including media professionals, the audience, organizations, governments, and donor institutions.

5-1-New Technologies That Help Correct Misleading Information and Contribute to Ensuring the Accuracy of Published News and Information: (Allcott and Gentzkow, 2017)

- **Fact-checking tools:** These are tools that are designed to verify the accuracy of news and information, and detect false or misleading claims.
- **AI-powered algorithms:** These algorithms are designed to analyze news and information, and detect patterns that may indicate misinformation or propaganda.
- **Open-source intelligence:** This is a methodology that involves collecting and analyzing publicly available information from various sources, in order to verify the accuracy of news and information.
- **Social media monitoring:** This involves monitoring social media platforms for false or misleading information, and taking appropriate action to correct it.
- **Crowdsourced journalism:** This involves relying on the collective efforts of a community to gather and verify information, and to expose false or misleading claims.
- **Deep fakes detection:** This involves using advanced technology to detect manipulated videos and images, and to verify their authenticity.
- **Virtual and augmented reality technologies:** These technologies are used to present news and information in a different and innovative way, and can be used to clarify news and

information and determine its accuracy.

- **Machine learning technologies:** These technologies are used to analyze and classify news and information, determine its sources, and assess its accuracy, and are used to improve performance and efficiency in processing news and information.
- **Blockchain technologies:** These technologies are used to verify the accuracy of news and information, determine their sources and funding sources, and reduce fraud and manipulation in information.
- **Cloud computing technologies:** These technologies are used to securely process and store news and information, and can be used to share information among different groups and organizations.

The effectiveness of these technologies depends on coordination and collaboration between various entities, including journalists and experts in media and information technology, as well as civil society groups, governments, and international organizations. It also requires public awareness of the need to verify the accuracy of news and information before publishing or sharing it (Garcia and other, 2019).

6-Future Challenges That Could Face the News Functions of Social Media:

The functions of news media on social media have witnessed significant developments in recent years, which can be traced to advances in modern technologies such as artificial intelligence and technological advancements. However, with

this progress, the news media functions on social media face numerous future challenges. Among these challenges are: (McGregor and Johannes, 2019)

- **Technological Advancements:** Technological advancements are one of the most significant challenges that face news media functions, as they can lead to a significant change in the journalistic work's methodology, requiring adaptation and improvement of the necessary skills and expertise.
- **Artificial Intelligence:** Artificial intelligence presents a significant challenge for news media functions, allowing journalists to use artificial intelligence techniques in research, analysis, and reporting processes. It is expected that artificial intelligence will increase the effectiveness of journalistic work and contribute to providing better media coverage.
- **Rapid Spread of Fake News:** Many journalists face the challenge of fake news spreading on social media, which requires the ability to verify information and ensure its accuracy before publishing it. It also requires enhancing media literacy among the public regarding the importance of verifying news before sharing it.
- **Dealing with Legal and Ethical Challenges:** Many journalists face legal and ethical challenges in their work on social media, requiring the ability to effectively and responsibly deal with these challenges. (Allcott and Gentzkow, 2017).

CONCLUSION

Usually, emphasis is placed on the importance of social media in disseminating news and information. This is due to the widespread use of these platforms and the speed at which content can be shared on them. These platforms are an effective tool for delivering information and news to a wide audience, including important events and breaking news. Additionally, users can exchange opinions and comments on various topics, leading to dynamic and interactive conversations among individuals.

However, users should exercise caution and verify sources before sharing any information or news, as much of the information circulating on social media is inaccurate and not based on factual evidence. It is also important to be aware of fake news that is spread on these platforms, which may cause harm to individuals or communities.

Regarding the challenge of using social media to disseminate news and information, the challenge lies in processing and analyzing information correctly from credible sources and identifying sources of fake news and information manipulation. Therefore, users must develop critical and analytical reading skills and verify the accuracy of information before sharing or interacting with it on social media

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