Chapter 2
Media Authenticity and Journalism:
An Inseparable Framework

ABSTRACT

The evolution of information and communications technologies (ICTs) had a strong positive impact in the media world, and especially in the arrival of the participatory and citizens' journalism paradigms. However, this progress was also marked by the explosion of content tampering and forgery attempts by the dissemination of false informatory data. Verification strategies and initiatives to prevent misinformation were introduced along with the advent of ICTs, aiming at shielding and resurfacing the essence of verification ethics. Based on the principle that information has to be validated before its channeling into journalistic pipelines, the present chapter investigates the trust between news outlets and audience. In specific, the lost "faith" in the media ecosystem is highlighted, focusing on the primary significance that truth holds along the end-to-end newsgathering and publishing processes.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, individuals have been confused about the real purpose of media, partly, due to the fact that the channels of communication between journalists (professionals or citizens) and the audience may propagate misinformation. Indeed, it has been revealed that intended falsification was attempted in many circumstances, purposing to disseminate subjective or opinionated stories (Amarasingam, 2011). There is often a belief that everything is intentionally biased because of the general attitude, which implies that the interpretation of individual cases becomes the rule. As a result, people get disappointed, therefore stop following the associated informing streams, since the provided information is no longer considered useful and necessary. Most journalists claim that truthfulness is the core element of the Journalism vocation, distinguishing news reports from other infotainment or political judgement articles (McNair, 2000). Hence, the notion of "Truth" is assumed to have a central place within the newsgathering and publishing industry.

Journalism holds a fundamental role in the way that people understand what takes place around the world. On one hand, journalists write stories about events that usually occur beyond the physical presence of the citizens, offering the unique accessing medium to the associated information. On the other hand, although reporters are entrusted with the prestige of "experts", they may be biased regarding their judgment about the facts. In the same context, individuals can also influence the content of the news streams or even participate in their formulation. For instance, audience is prone to consume events which appeal to emotions or personal beliefs, offering the opportunity to criticize rather than to applaud. Operating likewise, consumers exert latent pressures on the production of such type of articles. Moreover, end users may shape their received information in many ways, i.e. in order to get informed from specific sources, they customize their favorite pages by connecting informing sites to their social network profiles. Other common practices include the combination of several kinds of devices /access terminals (with their adaptation/customization attributes) and the selection of geographically determined updates, associated with their place of residence or interest. Furthermore, consumers can shape news items by interacting with nonlinear storytelling tools and applications (Thurman, 2015).

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