The Future Studying of Virtual Social Networks in the Face of Iran's Traditional Media based on the Formation of Robot Journalism

Hazhir Fathi⊙
Ph.D. student of Communication and Business Sciences, Faculty of Humanities and Law, Isfahan Islamic Azad University (Khorasgan), Isfahan, Iran, hajhir.fathi@yahoo.com
Faezeh Taghipour＊⊙
Faculty member and associate professor of the Department of Communication and Business Sciences, Faculty of Humanities and Law, Islamic Azad University of Isfahan (Khorasgan), Isfahan, Iran,f.taghipour@khuisf.ac.ir
NafisehVaez⊙
Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science and International Relations, Islamic Azad University, Shahreza Branch, Iran, vaezsh85@yahoo.com

Abstract

Purpose: The present research studies the future scenarios of social networks' confrontation with traditional media and how to form a robot journalist.

Method: This research was conducted with the prospective research method using the scenario writing technique. To achieve the uncertainties, the Interpretative-Structural Modeling (ISM) method was used with the benefit of Mic Mac software, and to discover the scenarios, the balance of mutual effects method was used with the benefit of the Scenario Wizard software.

Findings: The output of the Scenario Wizard software showed 4 scenarios with zero compatibility (probable), 11 scenarios with one compatibility (believable scenarios), 32 scenarios with two compatibility (possible scenarios). According to the findings of the research, four factors of technological degradation of affairs, generation z (digital natives), media ownership and the power of large-scale traditional media were identified as key factors.

Conclusion: Possible scenarios show that the trend of audience decline in traditional media continues, and the government may limit the technology-based affairs, but the restrictions applied in the field of technology will change the trend of increasing influence of social networks and decreasing the audience of traditional media. Therefore, in order to overcome the issue of lack of audience and continue professional life, traditional media should turn to intelligent forms of journalism, including "robot journalism".

Keywords: Social Networks, Media, Future , Robot Journalism, Scenario

Introduction

Digital media are a big threat to traditional media so that in addition to affecting the audience and the speed and publication of news, information and content, they have also threatened the monopoly of traditional media (Da-Costa et al, 2021). In social networks based on the Internet, the concept of the user replaces the traditional concept of the audience, because in these networks, the relationships are of an interactive type, meaning that the user is no longer a consumer of content, but also creates content in a decentralized collective process (Taghipour, 2016: 94). The study of social media activity is focused on blogs and social networks such as Facebook and Twitter, which are more or less young networks. Based on the theoretical hypotheses about the information process (the model or the triple functions of information such as cognitive, communicative and cooperative/collaborative functions) and society, social media communication can be explained based on social theory (Fuchs, 2019).

Social media, such as Facebook, describe different roles in human life based on the creation of personal profiles. In contemporary modern society, different social roles have converged in social spaces, the boundary between public life and private life, as well as work and home environment, has been shaken (Fuchs & Trotter, 2015).This research seeks to first discover the drivers affecting the future of social networks and then identify the possible futures of social networks in the face of traditional media. This research seeks to answer the question, what is the status of social networks in the future in the face of traditional media? Yan (2021), in a study entitled "Social media is redistributing power", states that social media has become an important part of people's daily life and society as a whole, which not only transforms the forms of communication, but also the ability to redistribute power. By changing the relationship between governments and citizens, they give citizens more opportunities for political participation. Agarwal and colleagues (2020), in a study titled "identifying user content in a multilingual social network" stated that social media have been the vanguard of political information and that political influence and focus on fake news in the main platforms of social media is inevitable.

Methodology

This research is a type of future research that was done with scenario writing technique. The current research is also exploratory because the findings of the

research are based on the discovery of future scenarios. In the current research, quantitative methods were used with the questionnaire tool and interviews were conducted with experts, so the research method can be considered as a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. In this research, a combination of different tools has been used to collect information. In this way, library studies have been used to explain the problem and study the background of researches and different aspects of the subject. Delphi method with questionnaire tool has been used to identify drivers. For the stage of uncertainties, the interpretive-structural modeling method was used with the questionnaire tool containing the matrix table of mutual effects, and the structural analysis method with the questionnaire tool of the matrix table of cross effects was used to discover the future scenarios. The statistical population of the research includes 20 journalists, editors, managers in charge of media, university faculty members in the field of social communication sciences and political sciences, and specialists in future studies, media future studies, and subjects related to the research topic.

Findings

The output of the scenario wizard software showed 4 scenarios with zero compatibility (probable), 11 scenarios with one compatibility (believable scenarios) and 32 scenarios with two compatibility (possible scenarios). According to the findings of the research, four factors of technology-based affairs, generation z (digital natives), media ownership and the power of large-scale traditional media were identified as key factors. Possible scenarios show that the trend of audience decline in traditional media continues, and the government may limit the technology-based nature of affairs, but the restrictions imposed in the field of technology will not change the trend of increasing influence of social networks and decreasing the audience of traditional media.

Conclusion

Artificial intelligence has helped online social networks to identify the user's needs and tastes and expose content that matches those needs, therefore, the content published on social networks is highly compatible with the consumer's needs. Traditional media, including the press, can also use artificial intelligence to provide part of the news and information needs of their audience. Among the technologies that virtual social networks are using to create a better user interface and user experience is artificial intelligence, which seems that the use of artificial intelligence can optimize the methods of content production in Iran's traditional media. Under this technology, during the last decade, robot journalism is also being

developed, which can be used by traditional media in the future. Robotic journalism can help media newsrooms in the field of content production. Journalism should be considered an innovative product that can help journalists to find sources, search quickly, adjust news quickly, and discover diverse sources. Just as social media are innovative products developed from their previous generations, robotic journalism as a part of artificial intelligence technology also helps improve traditional media newsroom performance to produce more engaging, resource-rich, and diverse content for readers to re-consume. These products are encouraged.

References

Da-Costa, Caroline Aboagye; Ganaa, Fausta Kilian; Apeakoran, Ephraim Nana(2021).Technological Determinism: New Media Applications and Adaptations within Traditional Media in Ghana, The Information Technologist: An International Journal of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Vol. 18 No. 1

fuchs, chritian and Daniel trottier (2015). Towards a theoretical model of social media surveillance in contemporary society communications: European journal of communication.

Taghipour, Faezeh. (2016). Analysis of virtual social networks, Tehran, Isfahan branch of Jihad University Press. (In Persian)