

Editorial 2

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Digital communication ethics: new media accountability models and tools

Ética de la comunicación digital: nuevos modelos e instrumentos de rendición de cuentas

The current context of journalism presents numerous structural changes, such as the collapse of the previous business model, a new relationship with the audience or a new newsroom organization. All these elements added to the public's lack of trust and the danger of disinformation explains why the media ethics is updating significantly. Classical principles such as truth, accuracy, privacy and impartiality remain valid, but the new digital environment sets different requirements. Digital journalists have had to face the "classical" ethical dilemmas and now new ones.

In this landscape, media accountability plays a crucial role to restore trust in news media among citizens. We must consider three essential values to reach this goal: transparency, self-regulation and public participation. This special issue aims to shed some light on new strategies, as innovative verification methodologies, that can be effective tools to fight distrust.

This special issue focuses on relevant research proposals and case studies about the conceptual transformation of media ethics, from media self-regulation to media accountability. Publication which is linked to two R&D Projects founded by Ministry of Science and Innovation: "Accountability and Media Systems in Spain: Real impact and good practices in Spanish Media" (MediaACES) (Grant reference: CSO2015-66404-P); and "Media accountability instruments against disinformation: The impact of fact-checking platforms as media accountability tools and curricular proposal FACCTMedia" (Grant reference: PID2019-106367GB-I00).

This special issue includes the following important topics: the evolution and prospects of research in communication ethics; some of the main ethical challenges in online journalism; the role and the self-regulation and media accountability instruments; the implementation of new models of transparency and open government to the context of the media; the active role of citizens in media accountability; the ethical use of social media, the impact of fact-checking in media accountability and some ethical issues in communication models.

A good starting point is the article "Research on Journalism Ethics in Spain (2007-2018). Evolution and prospects" by Marta Redondo-García, from the Valladolid University (Spain), and Carmen Caffarel-Serra, from the King Juan Carlos University (Spain). The paper studies production, objects of study or most common methodologies in this field. The main novelty of this study lies in the fact that not only scientific articles have been analyzed, but also doctoral theses, R&D projects and research groups on ethics. The main results of the research show that, despite its central position in the journalistic profession,

there is a lack of scientific production on ethics. Furthermore, the production is centered around very few universities and researchers, the internationalization is very limited, and the digital environment plays a very small role.

Innovation in the field of accountability is precisely the key aspect of the second proposal included in this monograph, entitled "Open Government in Mexico and the evolution of accountability". This text focuses on the analysis of the four action plans carried out by the Alliance for the Mexican Open Government Partnership to find out if this Alliance has allowed a greater involvement of civil society, and technological innovation in the field of accountability. Although the results of the proposal allow us to observe a clear transition towards a greater participation of civil society, especially in the field of transparency, there are still few actions carried out to consolidate control, evaluation and monitoring mechanisms of the government actions in Mexico

Along with self-regulation and transparency, citizen participation is essential to consolidate the accountability of the media in society. This issue is addressed in the proposal "Perceptions of Ecuadorian journalists and citizens about media accountability instruments", which emphasizes the need for the active role of the audience to consolidate plurality and diversity, media. The proposed analysis uses qualitative and quantitative methodologies through surveys and virtual discussion forums; this with the purpose of learning the perception of Ecuadorian journalists and citizens about the accountability instruments encouraged internally and externally the social media. The results, however, show that the most appreciated accountability instruments are still the traditional ones external to media companies, especially the Participation Law regarding accountability.

The politicized celebrities have the power to mobilize their followers towards specific causes by using social networks (Street, 2004; Wheeler, 2013). This is the starting point of the article "Politicized celebrities against the far-right on Twitter. Political preferences and activity of users retweeting Rosalia's anti Vox tweet after the 2019 general elections in Spain" which analyzes the impact of the tweet "Fuck vox" published in November 2019 by the Catalan singer Rosalia. The author counted more than 90 thousand retweets of that twitter, and analyzed a sample of them. Among other results, this paper shows the potential of politicized celebrities -as Rosalia- to mobilize their social network followers, even the non-politicized.

The final article addresses a topic that is becoming relevant nowadays: the presence of trolls that may represent a potential threat to the twitter profiles of the mass media. The article "Reality and detection of trolls in the social networks of the mass media" analyzes the case of the twitter of the Spanish newspaper "El País", one of the main in the country. The research questions focus on the frequency of trolls appearing and the relation between engagement of a tweet and the trolls presence. Through the analysis of 412 tweets - carried out between January the first and the seventh, 2022- the authors found that trolls are very active -particularly in certain sections- and with a greater prominence of haters compared to other typologies. Beyond the concrete results, the main contribution of this article is the proposal of a predictive model on the presence of trolls interacting with the social profiles of newspapers.