

Article

The Concept of “New Media” Among News Producers

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Abstract: The aim of this study is to understand how Jordanian journalists view social media networks as being related to the news industry and the extent of their dependence on these networks in producing news. It also explores the opinions of journalists on the pros and cons of these networks through the lens of relationship between these networks and professional journalism. The study uses the qualitative approach by conducting interviews with a number of professional Jordanian journalists. The most prominent results that the study revealed are that journalists view social networks as an important and beneficial development. There is optimism among journalists about the relationship between professional journalism and social media. Also, social networks have brought several benefits to the professional journalism. The results also show that there is a firm belief among journalists that social networks cannot be considered a substitute for traditional media.

Keywords: Social media; Professional journalism; Journalists; Citizen Journalism

1. Introduction

Social media are changing how people receive and share news and information (Phillips et al., 2009). The words “citizen journalist” have been incorporated into journalism through technology, and news organizations have dismissed employees yet there is still a need for content production (Ludtke, 2009). It is the job of journalists to adapt to this technology (Meltzer, 2010). This means using social media tools in ways that add value to what they do news content on social media platforms allows users to create news regardless of whether or not they are professional journalists. Social networking sites in the world are considered a reality that people deal with and spread stories through texts, pictures, videos, or all channels together. Traditional news platforms like newspapers and news websites often do not provide such features. Keen (2007) argues that journalists and directors of major media have documented doubts about blogging and social media, and early blogs were seen as inconsistent with the balanced tone of many newspapers. The informal style and nature of the blog’s speech were uncomfortable for some traditional journalists. The value of news filtering and verification has diminished in an age in which anyone could become a “citizen journalist.” However, Newman et al. (2013) suggests that the mainstream news media use social networks to improve their news production and dissemination. Difficult questions must be asked to know how new technologies are affecting journalism, along with what is actually achieved for the news organization in the presence of these technologies. How active should, every news organization be on all social media platforms, and to what extent can news organizations achieve the maximum benefit through these platforms (Ludtke, 2009)? Thomas (2013) argues that traditional journalists are taking on a different role by using social media as a way to present and promote their work. Numerous studies have been conducted on the impact of the emergence of social media on journalism. However, there has been little qualitative research examining journalists’ perceptions of their professional work with social media platforms. The purpose of this study is to understand and explain how Jordanian news-story producers perceive social media networks as related to making news and the extent to which they rely on these networks in producing news, in addition to knowing their opinions of the pros and cons of

these networks. The study uses the qualitative approach by conducting personal interviews with the study sample.

2. Results

The current section explored the data gathered. Throughout the analysis, three main themes emerged from the respondents: Relationality, Inclinations and Limitations, and Citizen Journalism. The results uncovered in this section were obtained through the email interview process. In this section, the first letter of the participant's first name and last name was used to refer to the participant who said the quote, while quotes have been inserted in the text to support the results.

2.1. Relationality

Through this section, the researcher explores the first major theme which provides answers about how journalists perceive social media in general. The participants' responses are related to their perceptions of the importance of social media to journalistic work, to the impact of social media on their professional work, the journalists' description of the relationship between journalism and social networks, and journalists' beliefs about replacing traditional mass media with social networks. The comments in this section also stem from journalists' perceptions of the interactivity feature provided by social media networks and its impact on their professional work, and how participants see the journalists' use of social networks in terms of their professional journalistic work. Also, the participant under this theme address the effects of these networks on the journalists' personal and professional identities and their perceptions of the extent to which the content of these networks is relied on in making news stories. The term "relationality" was coined to be one of the main topics, since the respondents' answers revolve around the relationship of journalists and professional journalism to social networks. The data were coded into eight subsections: Importance, Relation with Journalism, Influence, Journalists' Use of Social Networks, Dependency, Substitution, Interactivity, and Identity. Together, these categories address the relationship of professional journalists and professional journalism to social networks from the viewpoint of the journalists.

2.2. Importance

The majority of respondents believe that social media is an "important development." Participants have different views about the importance of these networks. A participant believes that it is a "significant tool" in expanding the scope of professional and social relations and following the latest news and developments by saying that they are "a virtual world that greatly help to form perceptions of people or form attitudes towards various pressing issues" (I.S.). Another believes that these networks have transformed from being a tool of luxury to one of the basics of life by saying that they "have moved to be one of the basics and necessities of life, because they have become an important source of information and other purposes such as communication" (Z.H.). additionally, a participant believes that social media is a negative development by holding the opinion that social networks are "a new means of expressing opinion without controls or ethics by many of users. They attack the opposite opinion and violate the right of expressing and responding" (O.M.).

The responses of the respondents in this category addressed the journalists' views about the importance of social media networks in general and how journalists see these networks as a new communication development.

2.3. Relation with Journalism

The results show that the majority of respondents saw that the relationship between the social media networks and traditional media is positive. Responses of five participants included a number of beliefs that the relationship is positive. One of the participants said that "traditional media institutions have become heavily dependent on social media and rely on digital content that is completely consumed on social media networks" (D.S.). Another one believed that the relationship is a complementary relationship by stating

that traditional media provides social networks with news information that interest the public, and social networks offer a tool for journalism to convey its messages" (A.A.). Some respondents believed the relationship is negative. They were of the opinion that social media networks have become the "leader" of the public opinion industry after this task was entrusted to traditional media. A participant mentioned that "traditional media is required to follow what is published on these platforms to be remaining in the scene" (D.A.). Another participant was of the opinion that "the more power social media networks escalate in influencing local public opinion the weaker the power of journalism to influence people's attitudes" (O.M.). There was a belief that the relationship between traditional media and social networks is a "complex" or "ambiguous" relationship by stating that "users of social networks may sometimes underrate the journalist's effort and material and sometimes overrate the materials that may be less important. On the other hand, these networks may provide a great deal to journalists through the great access to audiences that these platforms achieve" (M.S.). Thus, this category examined the journalists' opinions about professional journalism's relationship with social networks.

2.4. Influence

Data indicates that the majority of respondents held the opinion that the influence of social media networks on journalism has both positive and negative sides at the same time. On the negative side, a participant pointed out that "social media networks have withdrawn the influence factor from traditional media," while on the positive side, "social media networks have achieved a digital presence for traditional media institutions" (A.A.). Another participant was of the opinion that "social networks created a new form of journalism that differs from what humans have witnessed over hundreds of years. However, social media had a great impact on 'credibility' due to the absence of 'controlling' standards" (I.A.). For three participants, the effect is completely negative. One of those held the opinion that "social media networks helped unprofessional people entering the journalism field and they began to introduce themselves as journalists, which led audiences to be unable to distinguish the professional journalist and the intruders in the journalistic work" (D.A.). Another one stated that social networks "abolished the traditional media, and the public has become relying on these networks for news or information" (J.S.). Also, there was a belief that the impact is completely positive. Some participants mentioned that "traditional media has a great opportunity to exploit features of these networks to preserve the professional journalistic work" (I.S.). This category dealt with journalists' views about the impact of social media on professional journalism and explained the nature of the impact.

2.5. Journalists' Use of Social Networks

Respondents see the journalists' use of social networks as "beneficial" for their journalistic work. Participants held different opinions about the benefits of these networks in creating stories. "It is good for journalists to follow the events and stories circulating on social networks. This contributes to verifying the information in a professional manner and providing the audience with reliable news based on valid sources" (D.A.). (Z.H.) indicated that "social networks help journalists create new news stories based on the content and information published on these networks." One participant held the opinion that journalists' use of social networks has both positive and negative aspects by indicating that "social networks allow quick access to different opinions held by users and this enhances professional journalistic work. However, journalists are always required to satisfy the desire of social media users not what is worth publishing" (M.S.). Throughout this category, the researcher examined the respondents' perceptions of journalists' use of social networks and whether their use of these networks is beneficial or not for their professional journalistic work.

2.6. Dependency

Respondents describe their dependence on social media content in producing news stories as at the "medium" level. To answer this question, the participants were given three options: "Low dependence, medium dependence, and high dependence." They

share the same justification that inaccurate information and information is the reason they do not rely heavily on social media content. (A.B.) pointed out that "The information circulating on social media networks may be incorrect or unreliable. Many users share stories without verifying or attributing them to their original sources, and they may be modified or distorted." (M.S.) argued that "Social media networks are a fertile environment for impersonation, spreading rumors, lies, etc." However, two respondents indicated that their reliance on the content of these networks is "low." (D.A.) and (A.A.) were of the opinion that "there is an abundance of unreliable information and rumors. Content on social networks always needs verification and confirmation." In this category, the interviewed journalists provided their descriptions of the extent of their reliance on social media content in their professional journalistic work and the reasons for the degree to which they depend on these networks. No mention was made of "high dependence" by any of the journalists.

2.7. Substitution

Data indicate that all of the participants held firm beliefs that social media networks cannot be considered substitutes for traditional media. One of the participants mentioned that "journalism has its tools, ethics for media work, and verification of information. This is not available on social networks" (O.M.). Also, users of social media networks "lack professional journalism skills and publishing ethics" (Z.H.). One of the participants mentioned that "social media networks cannot be considered substitute but they may enhance and support traditional media's access to audience" (A.B.). This category addressed the opinions of journalists about the possibility of replacing traditional media with social networks and the possibility of these networks being considered completely alternative media. There is a consensus that traditional media cannot be replaced by social media at all.

2.8. Interactivity

This section concerns participants' responses about their perception of social media interaction and its impact on their professional work. The results of the analysis indicate that the majority of participants described the "interactive" feature of social networks as positive. These participants saw that this feature provided them with a number of benefits in relation to their journalistic work. (A.A.) and (I.S.) mentioned that "This feature creates conversations with the audience without barriers and helps journalists know what is on their minds about the issues." (D.S.) mentioned that "Through interactivity, the audience adds some information that supports the news story." (J.A) pointed out that "interactivity helps quickly spread news stories to audiences." Two of the participants believed that the feature of interactivity bears both positive and negative sides. They are of the opinion that "interactivity helps journalistic materials reach a larger segment of the audience, and it gives journalists feedback from the public. However, it may cause unethical abuse and spread rumors" (M.S., O.M.). However, one of the participants described this feature as negative, mentioning that "interactivity led to the creation of news stories becoming dependent on interactivity on social media networks. Interaction features created chaos and contributed to focusing on topics other than those that should be focused on" (D.A.).

This category generally examined journalists' perceptions of the "interactivity" feature that social media networks offer. The results confirmed that journalists prefer interactivity as it provides enrichment for their professional journalistic work. Journalists explain the reasons for their preference for the interactive feature on social media networks.

2.9. Identity

This section concerns participants' responses about the impact of their personal use of social networks on their journalistic identity and their perceptions about the combination of social networks between personal and professional identity. The results indicate that the majority of respondents believed that the professional and personal identities of journalists "negatively" affect each other on social networks, and these

networks cannot combine the two identities. The participants mentioned that journalists are being bullied and abused by some users when they personally use these networks saying that “journalists are exposed to bullying, non-constructive criticism, and interference of personal life by users” (D.A.). (D.S.) was of the opinion that “journalists are unable to post their own opinions on social media due to their professional identity,” while (I.A.) mentioned that “journalists’ personal opinions negatively affect their professional credit among the audience.” One of the participants provided an example stating that “I lost my job as a correspondent for a channel because I published [a] personal opinion on Facebook” (J.S.).

However, other participants held the belief that there is no effect of one identity on the other both their professional and personal identities can be enjoyed on social media networks. “I follow a professional journalistic ethic that prevents bias. I can enjoy posting my personal opinions on my profile. The journalist’s dependence on social media networks or his daily use of them contributes to creating an involuntary state of combining the two personal and journalistic identities” (I.S.). A participants argued that journalistic work can be separated from personal practice, saying that “when I write an article, I am a journalist, and when I express my personal opinion on social networks, I am only a citizen” (M.S.). (O.M.) argued that “social networks offer space to express my personal opinions besides using these social networks for my journalistic work.” The current category examined the opposition to the journalistic and personal identities of journalists on social networks. Also, it revealed journalists’ perceptions regarding the possibility of combining these identities on these networks, given that these networks provide the possibility of both the personal and professional use of individuals in general.

2.10. Inclinations and limitations

In this section, questions were asked that are related to the professional work of journalists and their preferences and problems of their use of social networks. This theme emerged as a main theme to address the advantages that cause journalists to be inclined to use these networks as well as the limitations that they face while using social media networks to produce news stories. The data were coded into two subsections: Benefits and Problems.

2.11. Benefits

The results indicated that the majority of participants shared the benefit that social media networks provided a means for them to spread the news they produce to the public. They also believed that these networks provide them with the “speed and information” they need to make news and transmit it to the public. For example, (D.A.) mentioned that “social networks gave me the ability to deliver the news stories I create to the widest possible spectrum of people as quickly as possible.” (D.S.) was of the opinion that “social media networks provided space for spreading news in addition to the factor of speed of reaching the audience.”

Moreover, some participants also see that there are benefits such as “feedback” from users that help them improve their journalistic work and social media easily offers journalists access to news sources. There was a belief that social networks provided a fertile environment for media research and helped to increase journalists’ credit among the public. This category addressed the benefits that attract journalists and make them inclined to use social media networks for professional journalistic work. Journalists believe that there are many benefits that social networks provide them that have helped them produce news stories.

2.11. Problems

The results show that the majority of respondents see “misinformation” as the most prominent problem for their social media use in producing news stories. Two of the participants also see that there are problems such as “information chaos, intruders in the profession.” (M.S.) indicated that “One of our problems of use is interference in the work of journalists by some users.” Two of the participants mentioned problems related to

“plagiarism of news and rumors.” Two participants also mentioned that the “lack of freedom” imposed by news organizations or imposed by the state on journalists is one of the problems they face in their use of social networks. (I.S.) argued that “Some obstacles related to restrictions imposed by authorities in some events, such as sit-ins, unions or popular protests by reducing the efficiency of the Internet service, and, thus, it is difficult to monitor what is going on.” One participant mentioned “offensive comments” as one of the problems a journalist faces while using social networks. This category focused on the problems that journalists face while using social networks in their journalistic work that pose limitations to this use. The participants mentioned that there are many problems they face while using social networks, but the most prominent one is wrong or misleading information.

2.11. *Citizen Journalism*

According to the data, there is a discrepancy in the respondents' answers regarding their perceptions of what is known as a “citizen journalist.” Respondents stated that there are “positive and negative” effects of citizen journalism on professional journalism. (I.S.) mentioned that “citizen journalism is a source of news or information, but sometime moral responsibility is absent from some by publishing immoral materials or violating the privacy of others.” (A.B.) pointed out that “citizen journalists contribute to achieving speed and scoop in some coverage because of their immediate presence at the event. However, they often influence the story by spreading false information.” Also, respondents indicated that the emergence of the citizen journalist has “negatively” affected the professional journalistic work. They believed that citizen journalists have contributed to lowering the level of trust in media by spreading false information. (D.A.) argued that “citizen journalism has negatively affected the media, and contributed to the loss of confidence between the traditional media and the audiences, as there are no controls over citizen journalism.” While two of the interviewees completely “refused” the term, “citizen journalist.” (A.A.) and (M.S.) mentioned that “press is a profession that has its sanctity and special conditions and professional standards that must be adhered to. Citizens must have conditions in order to play the journalistic role.”

As it is a subject related to professional journalism, “citizen journalism” emerged as a major theme in the study. The theme focused on journalists' perceptions of the concept of citizen journalism in light of the presence of social networks. In this theme, the respondents describe the impact of the citizen who creates news and information and transmits it through these networks. The answers of the majority of respondents indicate that the emergence of citizen journalism has negative and positive effects at the same time, while some of the journalists who were interviewed did not recognize the term. None of the respondents indicated that the emergence of citizen journalism has purely positive effects.

3. Discussion

The information gathered from the data raised many points to discuss. The current section provides an opportunity to explore and discuss the data objectively. The discussion process provides an evaluation of journalists' perceptions of social media prominence and its impacts on professional journalism. In addition, the benefits preferred by the journalists and the problems they face while using these networks are discussed. The discussion deals with the emergence of the so-called “citizen journalist” and how journalists view this term in light of social media networks that make it possible for individuals to create and publish content.

Respondents showed that social networks are an “important development” for journalism in general, as they are a public space that allows individuals to expand the scope of professional and social relationships and follow the latest news and developments, as

well as a tool for the flow of information. This finding is consistent with Safori (2016) that journalists believe that social networks are an inclusive system for sharing knowledge and developing societies through information transmission and exchange. Social networks have been shown to have a positive effect on access to information (Tajudeen et al., 2016). Social networks are a mine of information (Diakopoulos et al., 2012). Also, Baruah (2012) posits that social networks are an important source of information that enables users to use their content for free. Kim et al. (2014) found that social media platforms are considered popular sources of information.

Most of the journalists interviewed were optimistic about the relationship between journalism and social networks. The analysis results confirm that respondents believed that social networks have brought journalism benefits by providing a wider space for news dissemination and a new tool for measuring audience feedback about their professional performance. These results are consistent with what Baruah (2012) found that social networks are an ideal place for user interaction and feedback. Also, Pathak (2018) argues that social media has added value to journalism by providing news organizations with greater potential for content marketing and branding. Social interaction is also an important source of news. Moreover, journalists do their professional work more efficiently through their use of social networks and keep people up to date with the news.

Despite the previous result, the results reveal that the respondents' opinions were split with regard to the influence of social media on journalism in general. Their influence can be both positive and negative. Simons (2016) argues that technology influences the way the public consumes information, and how the profession is practiced at the individual and institutional levels. McNair (1998) points out that "technology is beneficial to news media but can also force unsettling changes on working practices and routines and subsequently come to be a threat to practitioners" (p. 125). With regard to the negative impact, the journalists interviewed acknowledged that the factor affecting the public opinion has become related to social media networks after traditional media was the one that was influencing the masses. Also, the journalists mentioned that these networks helped intruders enter the field of journalism, which affected the quality of the journalistic product. Despite the benefits of social media networks in relation to journalism, Andrew (2016) reveals that some negative aspects in terms of social media influence on journalism may lie in the validity of the content of these networks. He mentions that citizen journalism is a new way of disseminating inaccurate information and unethical practices in the name of traditional journalism. However, on the positive side, the interviewees indicated that social media networks achieved a digital presence of traditional media institutions that contributed to their spread and that these networks added professional features to traditional media that helped strengthen professional work. In this regard, Zubiaga et al. (2019) mentions that social networks bring new opportunities for journalists by providing new means of gathering news and accessing a large number of news updates and press reports.

The vast majority of respondents believed that the use of social networks by journalists benefits professional work. The analysis reveals that these networks help journalists create new news stories based on the content and information published on these networks, and they help journalists find topics for their news stories and keep up with the latest developments. In media evolution, Stöber (2004) suggests that at the beginning of the phase of invention "the new technology improves something old" (p. 487). Bradhan and Kumari (2018) found that journalists mainly use social media as a news source to find story ideas and publish the stories they produce. Paroy (2012) argues that social networks provide features that allow content creation and sharing. Hence, these networks are a rich source of information. Additionally, Simons (2016) found that social networks made information more accessible to society.

The results show that the majority of participants rely on social media content to produce news stories at a "medium" level. Participants argue that inaccurate information published by users on these networks reduces their willingness to rely heavily on social network content.

The results of the research show that social networks cannot be considered a substitute for traditional media, given that traditional mass media has professional work and ethics, which is not available in social media networks. This result is consistent with what Simons (2016) has found. He posits that journalism is seen as something different from social media in terms of characteristics such as education and function. He argues that journalism cannot be replaced without a professionalism factor that must be available in the alternative. Stassen (2010) agrees with this finding by stating that there is no fear of replacing social media with journalism, as social media networks cannot produce professional newspaper reports and stories the way traditional journalism does. Ritter (2015) agrees that journalists have a feeling that the digital threat to journalism is real but that they do not see this threat as amounting to journalism being canceled.

For most of the journalists who were interviewed, they believed that the “interactivity” feature of social networks helps spread news and obtain feedback from the audience, in addition to helping them to know what is going on in the public's minds about the issues. Social networks provide new platforms for journalists that enable them to speak with the public and allow interaction between users and journalists (Mackay, 2017). Also, this result is consistent with what Namasinga and Orgeret (2020) believe that social media networks are an important component of journalism, as they allow news content to be shared on them and offer the features of interaction that contribute to shaping news.

For the majority of journalists interviewed, the journalists' professional and personal identity negatively affects each other on social networks. They acknowledge that these networks do not combine the personal and professional identity of journalists. Personal identity conflicts with the professional identity of journalists on social networks and negatively affects each other. Journalists' personal identity may affect their professional reputation, while journalists may refrain from publishing their private information or personal opinions on social media networks for fear of jeopardizing their personal profiles. Journalists are subjected to abuse and interference in their personal life by users if they use social networks for personal purposes. These results are in line with Lee (2015) who found that journalists' perceptions greatly influence the perceptions of their news products. When a journalist is viewed positively or negatively, his news products are evaluated based on his impression, which means that the personal and professional identities of the journalists have an influence on one another.

The results show that there are many benefits that journalists interviewed receive as a result of their use of social networks in their professional journalistic work. Most of the participants share the idea that these networks have provided them with platforms to spread the news they produce to the public. The speed factor was also one of the benefits of social networks in journalists' point of view. The results also reveal that these networks provide journalists with information about the stories they want to write about the events they want to keep up with, as well as feedback from the audience that promotes their work. Such findings agree with Stöber (2004) argument that “society ‘institutionalizes’ inventions by discovering new possibilities of communication; [...] it formats new media functions and adapts new media; society accepts new media by creating a new political framework and a new legal order for new media” (p. 485). Moreover, such findings are consistent with what Mackay (2017) posits that social networks are a source of news for journalists and they have a variety of sources and ideas. These networks are used to broadcast news and enhance audience reach. Also, Thomas (2013) found that the belief of journalists who agreed on the power of social media stemmed from that these networks provided possibilities through which the public could report feedback. This allows the audience to play the role of transmitter and evaluate news information. Pradhan and Kumari (2018) agree with these findings that the rise of social media networks has made some journalism jobs easier in terms of finding information, spreading news, and reaching out to audiences.

However, “disinformation and misinformation” were among the most prominent problems that journalists face in their use. Thomas (2013) confirms this finding and he indicates that the journalists' use of social media may be of lower quality due to the fact

that there is kind of uncertainty when using social media as a source of information. Information often has to be checked twice to make sure it is correct. Moreover, these networks enabled anyone to report news. Ritter (2015) also agreed when he found that information gathered from social media networks must be verified before it is published or broadcast. He argues that the quality and accuracy of information picked from social media networks are a source of concern for journalists. The journalists also acknowledge that they face challenges such as information chaos, abusive comments and news plagiarism by some users. This confirms with Pradhan & Kumari (2018) when they point out that the emergence of these networks with the vast amount of published information made it more difficult for journalists to verify facts for journalists. In addition, such findings correspond with what Perlmutter and Schoen (2007) mentioned that lack of fact-checking, rumors and dissemination of lies and plagiarism and copyright violations are among of problems of journalists' use of social media networks.

Finally, the results show that journalists do not see the emergence of citizen journalism as entirely positive for professional journalism. The majority of the journalists interviewed expressed that the emergence of citizen journalism is either a "double-edged sword" in terms of its impact on their professional work; for some it is completely negative. This result can be explained by the fact that journalists are biased towards the standards of their profession, so they do not consider citizens as professional journalists, and they relate the misinformation they find on social media to the citizen who plays the role of the journalist. It can be inferred from this result that journalists view the citizen as a source of information and not as a journalist. Interviewed journalists also showed intolerance of the term, and they rejected it. They believe that ordinary citizens cannot be called journalists. In this context, Thomas (2013) agrees with this finding when he found that many journalists see their professional training as differentiating them from the citizen journalist. Also, this finding is consistent with Simons (2016) when he found that Russian professional journalism workers have a more positive position towards social media than citizen journalism. He noted that journalism was seen as having professional and educational characteristics and could not be substituted for amateurs. Hujanen (2018) also found that there are perceptions that citizens of journalists in the age of social networks do not adhere to the ethical principles of journalism and that they violate this by publishing news without verification.

4. Materials and Methods

This study aims to understand both the rise of social media as an influencing factor in the work of journalists and to know the attributions of importance this brings to them and their news production. A qualitative research methodology was used for the study. According to Tracy (2013), qualitative research helps people understand the world and its institutions. The qualitative methodology can provide knowledge that targets societal issues, questions, or problems. Qualitative research is rich and comprehensive and provides an understanding of a process that focuses on the living experience in its context and interprets participants' perspectives and their stories. It also shows how many of the explanations could theoretically be more convincing.

Participants were recruited through an online post (see appendix 1) to request participants to participate in the study including information about the study and the participants' criteria. The post was published on the researcher's page on Facebook, on the pages of some friends who are or know Jordanian journalists, and on some Jordanian journalist's WhatsApp groups. The researcher chose the first ten journalists who met the criteria for the study. Because of the distance between the participants' location and the researcher's location, in-depth interviews were conducted through e-mail. Tracy (2013) argues that interviews, even if in written form, provide discovery, understanding, reflection and explanation as they explain and clarify participants' experiences and perspectives on phenomena. Through interviews in the form of qualitative surveys, the researcher can explore hidden or ambiguous phenomena. The interviews give the respondents the opportunity to present their opinions and motives and this is not available through observing the participants. Mack et al., (2005) say that "interviews offer the opportunity for participants to express themselves in a way ordinary life rarely affords them" (p. 29). The researcher developed 13 standard interview questions (see appendix 2) that their answers helped to answer the research' main questions with allowances for possible follow-ups or alterations as interviews proceeded.

For conducting the interviews, the researcher translated the research questions from English into the participants' native language. Oxley et al. (2017) argue that translation is used as a primary tool in research when there is a difference between the language of the data collected and the language of the audience to which the results of the study are intended.

The researcher translated the research questions and data provided by the participants, as his mother language is the same as the participant's language. Elderkin-Thompson et al. (2001) suggest that the researcher who collects the data can be the translator when the researcher speaks the language of the person being interviewed. However, the translator must be present when the interview is conducted in a language that the researcher does not speak.

In order to maintain the privacy of the participants, the researcher encoded the names of the respondents by choosing the first letter of the participant's first and last name method, so that their names do not appear in the study. Creswell (2013) considers that the responsibility for participant confidentiality to maintain anonymity for readers is in researchers' hands. He states that "A researcher protects the anonymity of the informants, for example, by assigning numbers or aliases to individuals" (p. 174). Creswell stresses that researchers must protect the identity of the participants at all stages of the research. He confirms that "privacy of participants" must be respected by "assigning fictitious names or aliases" (p. 59).

Data analysis was carried out in two stages. The first stage included translating and transcribing data from the participants' native language into English. The second stage included analysis of the data to develop categories and themes (Al-Amer et al., 2016).

The current study had the Institutional Review Boards (IRB) approval before conducting interviews with the participants (see appendix 3).

Participants were provided with consent forms and they signed on them before participating (see appendix 4). The forms included that participant is required to sign informed consent form that outline their rights, including that their right not to participate

or stop participating in the study at any point. The consent forms also included informing the interviewees that the name and details of their organizations will remain strictly confidential. The identities of the participants will also be kept confidential. Moreover, the forms inform participants of the general purpose and nature of the study and the data will be kept in a safe place and it will be only used for academic purposes (Tracy, 2013).

The researcher used a purposeful sample to gather data answering the research questions. A convenience sample was used. Such samples are convenient, easy, and relatively inexpensive to access (Tracy, 2013). Data was collected through interviews that the researcher conducted with 10 participants through e-mail. Interviews were conducted with journalists who are involved with the Jordanian news industry. Those participants provided data to understand their perceptions of the impact of social media on their journalistic profession.

Participants were a convenience sample of 10 participants (2 females and 8 males) who live in Jordan and have experience with professional journalism and were willing to share their thoughts to answer the questions of the study. The main two characteristics of the participants were: (1) work as a "journalist" and (2) the professional work is "related to social media networks." The participants did not receive any compensation or benefit for their participation. Participant criteria included that they have worked as professional journalists for at least three years and are over 18 years old. The researcher excluded those who work at the news organizations as managers because they do not engage with creating news stories as what professional journalists do, and their answers may not fit the purpose of the study. There were no other exclusion criteria. All participants are non-English speakers, and their mother tongue is Arabic. After completing the interviewing process with the participants, the researcher collected data and analyzed it to extract the results of the study.

Below are the briefs of the journalists who participated in the study. Every participant had a code (the first letter of each participant's first name and last name) used to relate them to their quotations in the results section.

Participant 1 (D.A.): A journalist, a news anchor, a programs presenter for a Jordanian TV channel, and an admin of social media pages for one of the Jordanian governmental news organizations for three years.

Participant 2 (I.A.): A journalist, a news editor for a Jordanian TV channel and its news site and specialized in local and Arab and international affairs. Their main daily work is creating news stories and broadcasting news through social networks.

Participant 3 (Z.H.): A journalist, a press editor for a Jordanian news website and a news presenter for a Jordanian radio station.

Participant 4 (O.M.): A journalist, an editor-in-chief for a Jordanian news website, and an investigative journalist of human rights and refugees issues.

Participant 5 (A.A.): A specialized journalist in new media, a director of the social media department for a Jordanian online website, and an educator for journalism and social networks skills.

Participant 6 (J.A.): A journalist, a press editor for newspapers and news websites, and a journalist at a Jordanian private organization.

Participant 7 (A.H.): A journalist and editor for a Jordanian news website and worked a reporter for the Jordanian Parliament.

Participant 8 (I.S.): A journalist and a preparer of the news script for a Jordanian TV channel.

Participant 9 (D.S.): A journalist, reporter, and news-script preparer for a Jordanian radio station.

Participant 10 (M.S.): A Journalist who produces news reports on the Jordanian local issues for the Al-Jazeera news site and for one of the Jordanian news sites.

The next section presents the results of gathered data. It provides the finding revealed through the analysis. Three participants were interviewed through email. All the interviewees are current journalists in deferment media organizations. The data were gathered

and analyzed into three main themes: relationality, inclinations and limitations, and citizen journalists.

5. Conclusion

The relationship between traditional mass media and social networks seems ambiguous. Some may consider these networks as a new type of media, while advocates of traditional media see that it is difficult for these networks to be a suitable alternative. This paper provides an insight into what journalists believe about social media networks and their relationship with traditional mass media. This study provides a comprehensive look at the relationship between professional journalists and social networks and the problems that challenge this relationship. The analysis process shows several results related to the practical realities experienced by journalists while they use social networks in the production of news articles and stories. There are also a number of positive and negative points related to this use. Mitigating negative impacts is a goal worth researching. There may be certain uses of social media by journalists that are not addressed in this study. With the multiplicity of social networks today, future studies could address which social networks journalists prefer in the news industry more than others. It is interesting to involve the audience and activists who take on journalistic roles on social networks in such studies to know their perceptions about the impact of the presence of such social networks on the state of professional media. Finally, some of the journalists interviewed offer recommendations such as studying the impact of social media networks on trust between traditional media and the public.

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