

**THE NEEDS FOR NEWS FLEXIBILITY BY JOURNALISM TEACHERS:
EVALUATING THE ROLES**

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to assess the needs for news flexibility by journalism teachers as well as evaluating the roles of news flexibility. The study showed that news flexibility has become one of the most critical components of modern journalism, especially with the increasing complexity of the global information ecosystem. As the digital environment continues to evolve rapidly, traditional news structures that once relied solely on fixed production cycles have proven inadequate for addressing contemporary information demands. From the study the roles of news to the public were also reviewed such that the roles were observed to be supply of information to the Public, education to the Public, Supports of Democracy and Civic Participation, promotion of Social Awareness and Public Welfare as well as shaping of Public Opinion and Cultural Identity. Conclusively, in our modern days news flexibility has become one of the most critical components of modern journalism increasing the complexity of the global information ecosystem. It was also concluded that there are various roles of news to the public such as giving proper information to the public, educating the Public, supporting democracy and civic participation, promoting social awareness and public welfare, as well as shaping public opinion and cultural identity. One of the recommendations was that news should be precise and concise for the public interest and use.

KEYWORDS: Needs, News flexibility, Roles and Journalism Teachers.

INTRODUCTION

The way news is created, accessed, and used in educational settings has changed due to the quick development of information and communication technology. In order to encourage active learning and global awareness, instructors are being asked to include flexible, real-time news resources into their pedagogy as classrooms move toward digital and socio-constructivist learning paradigms.

According to Manca and Bocconi (2020), modern teaching requires educators to move beyond static content, adopting dynamic information sources that reflect contemporary issues and societal changes. This change emphasizes how important it is for educators to know not just how to find reliable news but also how to modify it to fit a variety of learning environments, learning objectives, and student skill levels. As a result, the idea of news adaptability becomes crucial to contemporary teaching methods.

Additionally, teachers are essential in helping pupils understand quickly evolving news material while promoting media literacy and critical thinking. Students need to be taught how to assess news reliability, bias, and contextual significance in light of the proliferation of false information and digital manipulation. Tambo et al. (2021) emphasize that teachers serve as

mediators who translate complex news events into meaningful classroom discussions, enabling learners to connect real-world issues with academic subjects. In order to enable inquiry-based learning, educators must be flexible in how they choose, simplify, and contextualize daily news. Examples of these strategies include project-based learning, collaborative digital debates, and real-time content analysis. This strengthens the teacher's role as a mentor in media literacy as well as a knowledge facilitator. Incorporating adaptable news resources increases student engagement and synchronizes teaching methods with the objectives of 21st-century education. Teachers can adapt information to students' interests and cognitive demands by using interactive platforms, multimedia news sources, and varied educational methodologies. As observed by Anand and Saini (2022), technology-enhanced news integration not only enriches subject comprehension but also strengthens students' participatory and reflective skills. As a result, educators using contemporary approaches need to be creative, flexible, and deliberate in their choice of accurate, up-to-date, and pertinent news sources. The teacher's role in encouraging news flexibility is crucial for developing knowledgeable, critical, and engaged citizens as education continues to become more globalized.

THE NEEDS FOR NEWS FLEXIBILITY

One of the most important aspects of contemporary journalism is news flexibility, particularly in light of the growing complexity of the global information ecosystem. Traditional news systems that previously relied only on set production cycles have proven insufficient to meet modern information demands as the digital world continues to change quickly. According to Pavlik (2021), the pace at which information is produced and consumed has accelerated significantly, making it imperative for news organizations to embrace flexibility as an operational and editorial strategy. This refers not only to the speed with which news must be gathered, verified, and disseminated, but also to the capacity of newsrooms to shift focus, adjust workflows, and integrate new technologies as situations evolve. Audiences of today demand interactive reporting formats, multimedia content, and real-time updates that fit their chosen consuming habits. In this sense, flexibility allows newsrooms to react quickly to breaking news while upholding editorial integrity and accuracy. Additionally, it entails the capacity to update content as new information becomes available, which is crucial in a time when false information spreads quickly via digital channels. As observed by Napoli (2020), modern news consumers have little patience for outdated or incomplete information, making continuous content upgrading a necessity. As a result, newsrooms must operate with greater fluidity, responsiveness, and technological awareness in order to remain relevant and reliable. This is due to the changing expectations of a fast-paced digital society as well as the evolving nature of information flow.

The evolving technology environment that influences the production, distribution, and consumption of news is another significant necessity for news adaptability. Newsroom operations have changed as a result of the incorporation of digital tools, artificial intelligence (AI), automation, analytics, and social media monitoring systems. Dörr and Hollnbuchner (2022) assert that AI technologies now assist journalists in tasks such as content generation, data analysis, fact-checking, and audience engagement tracking. These technologies necessitate flexible newsroom setups that can facilitate quick updates and smooth communication between digital tools and human journalists. In a media industry where accuracy and speed are highly prized, news organizations run the risk of slipping behind if they lack flexibility. Additionally, media companies can adopt new platforms and formats like live streaming, podcasting, interactive storytelling, augmented reality reporting, and

mobile-first news designs because to technological flexibility. As Tandoc and Maitra (2021) note, audiences increasingly consume news through diverse channels and devices, which means rigid or outdated production systems cannot meet audience needs. Flexible newsrooms may swiftly modify content to meet platform-specific needs, guaranteeing optimal visibility, relevance, and engagement. Additionally, technology-driven flexibility facilitates speedier decision-making and more effective resource allocation, which lessens the operational strain on journalists. Additionally, it enables crisis-driven improvisation in situations where standard reporting techniques might be disrupted, including during pandemics or political turmoil. Because technology is changing journalism, news organizations must constantly upgrade their systems, welcome innovation, and cultivate a culture that prioritizes adaptation. This is why news flexibility is so important.

Additionally, improving real-time responsiveness—a hallmark of effective modern journalism—requires news adaptability. News production used to follow regular cycles, such as weekly newsmagazines, hourly radio bulletins, or daily newspapers. But these cycles have been drastically changed by the emergence of social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and TikTok, which have made it possible for knowledge to spread in a matter of seconds. According to Lewis and Westlund (2020), this shift has placed increased pressure on news organizations to respond immediately to breaking events while maintaining accuracy and reliability. Organizations may update stories often, change headlines, add new information, and quickly fix mistakes using flexible news systems. This is important because mistakes or delays can result in disseminated false information that damages public confidence and erodes journalistic credibility. Flexible newsroom staffing methods that allow teams to be rearranged in response to changing circumstances are also necessary for real-time responsiveness. For instance, flexible newsrooms can swiftly transfer reporters, multimedia experts, digital producers, and fact-checkers to priority jobs during emergencies like natural disasters, terrorist attacks, or public health crises. Flexible editorial techniques also facilitate quicker communication between central news hubs and field reporters, allowing for more thorough and cohesive coverage. As Pavlik (2021) explains, audiences increasingly rely on digital platforms for immediate information, and failure to respond promptly leads to disengagement. As a result, news flexibility is essential for maintaining the promptness, precision, and flexibility needed to prosper in a fast-paced media environment where information is shared quickly.

THE ROLES OF NEWS TO THE PUBLIC

- **News Informs the Public**

By delivering timely, accurate, and pertinent information on events occurring locally, nationally, and internationally, news plays a crucial role in educating the people. According to McQuail (2020), the informative function of news is the foundation of mass communication because it enables people to understand the world around them. Public health, education, technology, foreign affairs, politics, and economic trends are just a few of the topics covered by news. Because false information spreads quickly on social media, this job has become even more important in today's fast-paced digital world. Tandoc and Maitra (2021) explain that credible news outlets help the public separate factual information from rumours and unverified claims. News provides life-saving information that enables people to make safe decisions during emergencies, such as disease outbreaks, security concerns, or natural disasters. As a result, news's informative function gives the people the information they need to make decisions on a daily basis and comprehend societal trends.

- **News Educates the Public**

Additionally, news plays a significant influence in education. It provides meaning by offering context, professional analysis, and interpretations that aid the public in comprehending complicated situations rather than just presenting information. Pavlik (2021) argues that modern journalism increasingly incorporates explanatory reporting, data journalism, and expert commentaries to improve public understanding. News covers subjects like climate change, economic changes, artificial intelligence, human rights, and global security trends through investigations, documentaries, and special reports. Cherubini (2023) notes that educational journalism promotes lifelong learning by helping people develop critical thinking and better awareness of societal problems. News serves as an additional educational resource outside of the classroom by introducing viewers to fresh information in a variety of sectors. As a result, its educational role contributes to the development of an informed, knowledgeable, and intellectually engaged public.

- **News Supports Democracy and Civic Participation**

The news's contribution to democracy is one of its most significant functions. The media serves as a watchdog, keeping an eye on government operations, exposing corruption, and holding authorities responsible. Lewis and Westlund (2020) describe journalism as a pillar of democratic governance because it provides transparency and ensures that political actors answer to the public. News informs citizens about elections, policies, legislative decisions, and political debates, enabling them to participate actively in political processes. Napoli (2020) explains that political news shapes voter awareness and helps people make informed electoral choices. Additionally, news promotes inclusion by providing a forum for underrepresented groups to express their issues. News enhances civic involvement and guarantees the smooth operation of democracy by promoting public discussion through editorials, interviews, and commentary. Without reliable news, public monitoring of leadership would be severely constrained and democratic engagement would decline.

- **News Promotes Social Awareness and Public Welfare**

News plays a major role in raising awareness about social issues that affect communities. According to Tandoc and Maitra (2021), news coverage can spark public action by highlighting social problems such as poverty, insecurity, unemployment, gender inequality, environmental degradation, and public health challenges. News reports often draw attention to the struggles of vulnerable groups and encourage government intervention or humanitarian support. McQuail (2020) notes that news also disseminates public welfare information, such as health campaigns, civic warnings, disaster alerts, and safety guidelines. By promoting social awareness, news strengthens community involvement and motivates people to participate in solutions that improve the quality of life. News promotes social cohesion, builds empathy, and lessens prejudice through investigative reporting and human-interest pieces. As a result, its contribution to improving public welfare helps create communities that are safer, healthier, and better informed.

- **News Shapes Public Opinion and Cultural Identity**

News influences how people think about issues by shaping public opinion. Pavlik (2021) states that the way news frames events affects how audiences interpret them. News institutions influence public discourse and choose which subjects receive public attention through headlines, tone, expert analysis, and editorial stances. Cherubini (2023) explains that the media has an agenda-setting function-it does not tell people what to think, but it strongly

influences what they think about. News also contributes to cultural identity by promoting shared values, national unity, cultural celebrations, and collective memory. Cultural pride is bolstered by coverage of sporting events, cultural festivals, national accomplishments, and local triumphs. Additionally, by educating people about different cultures, exposure to international news promotes intercultural understanding. Thus, news's influence on cultural identity and public opinion promotes social cohesion, common ideals, and well-informed viewpoints.

CONCLUSION

In our modern days news flexibility has become one of the most critical components of modern journalism increasing the complexity of the global information ecosystem. There are various roles of news to the public such as giving proper information to the public, educating the Public, supporting democracy and civic participation, promoting social awareness and public welfare, as well as shaping public opinion and cultural identity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. News should be precise and concise for the public interest.
2. News should also be relevant and show a true story of the incidence but not a mere rumor or fake information.
3. Educational journalism should be that which actually promotes lifelong learning by helping people develop critical thinking and better awareness of societal problems.
4. News should also be identified with educational function which actually helps build an informed, knowledgeable, and intellectually active public.

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