The reliance of the media elite on citizen journalism during news coverage

اعتماد النخبة الإعلامية على صحافة المواطن أثناء التغطية الإخبارية

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Abstract:

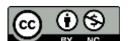This study aims to explore the reasons behind the Algerian media elite's reliance on citizen journalism as a source of news. The participation of citizen journalists in news coverage, content production, and visual reporting has been a central topic in numerous academic studies and scientific discussions among specialists in the field of new media and communication sciences. This interest has grown significantly with the rapid advancement and widespread adoption of new technologies, including smart devices, digital platforms, and interactive social networks, which have become integral to various aspects of life, including media activities. This evolution has captured the attention of media organizations, particularly news television channels, leading them to engage with and utilize such content. Consequently, citizen journalism has emerged as an active contributor to achieving the principles of public service media.

Keywords: Media elite, citizen journalism, news coverage.

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- Abstract in French:

Cette étude vise à identifier les raisons de la dépendance de l'élite médiatique algérienne vis-à-vis du journalisme citoyen comme source d'information la production de matériel d'information et le traitement photographique des évènements est l'un des thèmes qui a été au centre de nombreuses recherches académiques et manifestations scientifiques parmi les spécialistes dans le domaine des nouveaux médias pour les sciences de l'information et de la communication, Surtout après le développement et la diffusion rapide des nouvelles technologies de dispositifs intelligents, les piliers techniques et les réseaux sociaux interactifs et leur entrée dans diverses activités de vie y compris les activités médiatiques, qui ont attiré l'attention des médias, notamment les chaînes de télévision d'information, à l'utilisation et au recours à ces contenus s Presse ", participant ainsi à la réalisation des principes de service public.

Mots-clés :Elite Media Citizen Press News Coverage.

- Abstract in Arabic:

تهدف الدراسة إلى التعرف على أسباب اعتماد النخبة الإعلامية الجزائرية على صحافة المواطن كمصدر للأخبار، حيث تعتبر مشاركة المواطن الصحفي في تغطية الأخبار وإنتاج المادة الإعلامية والمعالجة المصورة للأحداث، من المواضيع التي شكلت محور العديد من البحوث الأكاديمية والنقاشات العلمية بين المختصين في ميدان الوسائط الجديدة لعلوم الإعلام والاتصال ، خاصة بعد التطور والانتشار الكبير والمتسارع للتكنولوجيات الجديدة من أجهزة ذكية ودعامات تقنية وشبكات اجتماعية تفاعلية ودخولها في مختلف أنشطة الحياة، بما فيها الأنشطة الإعلامية، مما لفت انتباه وسائل الإعلام وفي مقدمتها القنوات التلفزيونية الإخبارية لتعاطي هذه المضامين والاعتماد عليها، لتصبح بذلك صحافة المواطن عنصرا مشاركا في تحقيق مبادئ الخدمة العمومية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: النخبة الإعلامية، صحافة المواطن، التغطية الإخبارية

- Introduction:

Communication and information technologies have undergone significant developments throughout various historical stages, earning a crucial place in different

aspects of life, including economic, social, cultural, and media fields. These technological advancements have led to the widespread adoption of new communication tools, such as computers, tablets, and smartphones connected to the internet and its applications. These tools have gained significant importance due to several factors, the most notable being the substantial increase in the number of users, which has reached billions. Additionally, these technologies integrate multimedia features, combining written text, audio, and audiovisual content simultaneously. Such characteristics align perfectly with various sectors of society, particularly the media and mass communication fields, which rely on instant information transmission and reception to reflect societal events with maximum speed.

Users of these new media technologies enjoy numerous advantages, mainly due to smartphones and various social applications. One of the most significant advantages is the ability to be present everywhere and at any time. This has facilitated extensive media coverage, paving the way for the emergence of a new form of alternative journalism known as citizen journalism. Ordinary individuals have leveraged the flexibility and ease of these digital platforms to transmit and publish information interactively, covering various journalistic genres. This shift has drawn considerable attention from mass communication outlets, particularly television, leading them to engage more with the virtual audience, especially amateur contributors.

Journalists have been significantly influenced by this new media landscape, which has imposed itself as a dominant force in the field. No longer passive recipients of media messages, audiences have become active participants in the news production process. As a result, many Algerian journalists heavily rely on social media platforms to gather news and information. Reporters no longer need to be physically present at the scene of events at all times, altering the traditional journalistic workflow.

Based on this context, the central research question arises: **What are the motivations behind Algerian journalists' reliance on citizen journalism as a source of information? What are the implications of this practice, and how does it influence the journalistic professionalism?**

The new media environment, characterized by dynamism and rapid technological advancements, has given rise to various modern journalistic forms, including electronic journalism. This form of journalism has evolved into multiple types and formats, such as media-owned websites, news portals, independent online newspapers, blogs, and electronic discussion forums, among others.

Electronic journalism emerged as a result of advancements in digital publishing technologies on the internet, encompassing various formats, applications, and websites, as well as radio and television broadcasting technologies over the web. In the early days of the internet, these publishing and broadcasting formats were primarily associated with organizations and institutions——whether media, cultural, or scientific. However, the advent of Web 2.0 revolutionized this landscape by enabling independent digital publishing and broadcasting, detached from institutional control.

With this evolution, ordinary users and amateurs gained the ability to engage in electronic writing and publishing through various platforms, such as blogs, personal web pages, social media platforms, social networking sites, forums, discussion spaces, and chat rooms. Additionally, they could broadcast audiovisual video recordings via video-sharing websites, podcasting technology, blogs, and participatory news sites——platforms similar to newspapers but operated by journalism enthusiasts. Another significant development was collaborative editing websites (wiki sites), which rely on wiki software, with Wikipedia being the most notable example.

Thus, users now have the ability not only to participate collectively in content creation through various digital tools but also to engage in individual content production, exercising full control over its creation and distribution. (Bouaziz, 2011, p. 48).

The scientific and technological revolution has garnered significant attention from scholars and researchers in both political science and media and communication studies. This information revolution aims to uphold citizens' right to information by reinforcing absolute freedom in the dissemination of news and data. This revolution is the result of three

preceding technological revolutions, culminating in what has become known in academic circles as Web 2.0, or the second generation of the internet.

This phenomenon has been referred to by various names, including new media, alternative media, community media, citizen media, and citizen journalism. The concept of citizen journalism was first introduced in 2003 by writer Dan Gillmor in his book We the Media: Grassroots Journalism by the People, for the People (Al-Ameri, 2011, p. 151).

The term Web 2.0 is one of the most significant concepts in the field of information technology. It was first introduced at the Web Development Conference in 2003, held in San Francisco by O'Reilly Media and Media Live International. The objective of the conference was to develop a new vision for the World Wide Web by categorizing internet sites into Web 1.0 and Web 2.0, based on the services, applications, and technologies they offer. Thus, it becomes clear that Web 2.0 is not a single technology or service but rather a collection of services provided by various websites (Jarrar, 2012, p. 44).

With the revolutions and protests that erupted in early 2011 across several Arab countries (Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Bahrain, Syria, and Algeria), digital communication applications found a highly favorable environment for growth and expansion within the Arab media and political landscape. These platforms witnessed remarkable development and a significant surge in user numbers.

This rapid adoption can be attributed primarily to the fact that most Arab media outlets are state-owned, prompting individuals to turn to these digital communication tools as alternative platforms to make their voices heard globally. They used these applications to document and share their harsh realities, countering the media blackout imposed by state-controlled public media and challenging the fabricated narratives often presented to the public (Bouaziz, 2011, pp. 173-188).

- **The Various Terminologies of Citizen Journalism:**

There are numerous terms and expressions used as synonyms for citizen journalism, which is itself considered a form of alternative media. Several labels have emerged, such as

"volunteer journalism," "grassroots journalism," "amateur journalism," "we-media," and "debate-based journalism." Andrew Leonard refers to it as "open-source journalism," while others describe it as "participatory journalism," among other names given to this emerging journalistic model (Sadiq, 2008, p. 185).

In academic and media circles, this phenomenon is also referred to using various terms, including "individual or personal digital publishing," "user-generated content," and "web journalism." Some scholars even label it as "the Fifth Estate," "democratic media," or "alternative journalism."

1. Citizen Journalism (Origins, Definition, Features, and Forms)

1.1. Origins:

Many experts in citizen journalism argue that it first emerged in the United States on November 22, 1963, when an American citizen, Abraham Zapruder, traveled to Dallas, Texas, carrying his cinematic camera to witness and film the motorcade of U.S. President John F. Kennedy. While recording the event, he inadvertently captured the assassination of the President. Three days later, Abraham sold the 30-second film to LIFE magazine for $150,000, completely unaware that he would become one of the most famous early examples of citizen journalism.

The movement of citizen journalism continued to evolve, notably during the 1988 U.S. presidential elections, where it was referred to as "public journalism." However, it gained significant prominence following the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the U.S. (Abdel-Moati, 2015, p. 85).

The turning point that firmly established citizen journalism as a major component of social media-based journalism occurred after the 2004 South Asian tsunami disaster. It also played a pivotal role during the Arab Spring revolutions between late 2010 and early 2011, as ordinary people documented these events through news reports and amateur videos recorded using handheld cameras or mobile phones. These citizen-generated contributions

provided a valuable addition to traditional institutional journalism, enhancing its coverage of these critical events (Al-Laban, 2011, p. 92).

1.2. Concepts of Citizen Journalism:

The terminology used to describe this type of journalism has varied. At times, it is referred to as participatory journalism (journalism participatif), particularly in the American context. Some French studies, such as that of media professor Rebillard Franck, define it based on professional standards. According to Rebillard, "Citizen journalism is managed by a team of non-professional journalists who produce and disseminate information via the Internet." (Rebillard, 2011, pp. 22-23).

It is also sometimes described as amateur journalism (journalism amateur), a term that initially referred to the direct production of written content and audiovisual materials by non-professionals related to current events.

Meanwhile, Shayn Bowman and Chris Willis define citizen or participatory journalism as: "An activity carried out by citizens to play an active role in the process of collecting, investigating, analyzing, and disseminating news related to current affairs." This participation aims to provide independent, verified, accurate, diverse, and essential information for democratic practice (Pélissier & Chaudy, 2009, pp. 89-102).

1.3. Definition of Citizen Journalism:

A- Linguistically:

A citizen journalist is an individual who is aware of their political rights and responsibilities and actively seeks to gather, publish, and share news through the Internet and social media platforms.

B- Terminologically:

The term citizen journalist is a modern concept that emerged as a result of advancements in information and communication technology, particularly with the rise of

smartphones as a medium and the advent of social media platforms, which serve as a channel for ordinary citizens to engage in journalistic work.

A citizen journalist is "any individual who assumes part of a journalist's role by reporting news and events they have personally witnessed in real-time." (Al-Dulaimi, 2018, p. 11). They aim to disseminate and share information within their social environment via social media platforms or contribute to both traditional and modern media outlets.

One of the common definitions of citizen journalism describes it as "a modern form of journalism that relies on non-specialized individuals whose occupations or positions allow them, or who are driven by the desire to have their voices heard and express their concerns, to provide newspapers and media outlets with news and information." (Bouchakour, 2019, pp. 21-22).

An operational definition of citizen journalism can be framed as the ability of individuals to produce diverse media content and document events and issues using various available technologies and tools. These advancements have transformed citizens from mere recipients of information into active reporters, transmitting news from the field to the digital space.

- **Features of Citizen Journalisme**
    1. Every citizen is a seeker of information, and anyone can become a source of news and information, including bloggers, internet users, ordinary citizens, and civil society organizations.

    2. The shift from mass media to citizen media: While traditional mass media follows a model of disseminating information from an individual to a group, citizen journalism reverses this model by relying on citizen journalists to distribute information from everyone to everyone.

    3. **A different editorial policy:** Citizen journalism follows its own unique editorial policies, where news must be immediate, continuously updated, and characterized by maximum timeliness and exclusivity.

4. **Personal participation:** Mobile democracy is an individual and voluntary act, not influenced by the agendas of specific organizations but rather by the personal political convictions of the individual, unlike traditional media.

5. Citizen journalism now competes with traditional journalism's monopoly on news and exclusives. Ordinary citizens often report events before professional journalists, as seen in the coverage of the London bombings and similar global incidents.

6. Through its literature, citizen journalism critiques traditional media and asserts its ability to perform the same roles but in a different manner, particularly in terms of publication and presentation. Unlike traditional journalism, citizen journalism does not seek profit, as it rejects institutional backgrounds and market-driven journalism. (Al-Bayati, 2014, p. 50)

7. News coverage and media reporting are no longer exclusive to traditional journalism; citizen journalism has entered the field, bringing greater diversity in the way topics are addressed and reported. Citizen journalism is also bold in presenting events from the perspective of ordinary people rather than from the viewpoint of authorities or government officials.

8. Citizen journalism has provided young people with a unique opportunity to break free from state-controlled or agenda-driven media and share information easily and at any time.

9. It offers a platform for discussion, interaction, and the exchange of opinions and perspectives, particularly among young people, regarding various public and sensitive issues.

10. Citizen journalism is free from censorship, as it is not subject to media regulations, making it a fertile ground for freedom of speech and expression.

11. However, it often lacks adherence to professional journalistic ethics and standards, which can negatively impact public taste and audience perception.

12. Citizen journalism plays a critical watchdog role in countries where press freedom and freedom of expression are advancing. (Alawna, 2017, p. 230)

Pros and Cons of Citizen Journalism

Pros :

- Rapid Access to évents.

- Ability to influence local, national, and global public opinion.

- Fast dissemination of information.

- High audience engagement with the news.

- Low financial costs for producing and publishing media content.

Cons :

- Many citizen journalists lack knowledge of the fundamental principles of journalism as an applied science.

- A significant number of citizen journalists have limited media literacy.

- Citizen journalists often exhibit bias toward issues and ideologies related to their own environments.

- Enthusiasm sometimes overrides objectivity in their work.

- Information is often inaccurate and, at times, contradictory. (Al-Jurf, 2014, p. 73)

This study is based on the theory of technological determinism, also known as the technological theory of mass media. This is one of the modern theories that emerged to explain the role of media and its impact on different societies. The pioneer of this theory, Marshall McLuhan, asserts that the content of media cannot be viewed separately from the technology of the media itself. He argues that the way media institutions present topics and

the audience they target influence what these media outlets communicate. However, the nature of the media through which individuals interact shapes societies more than the actual content of communication.

Technological determinism is rooted in the belief that technology alone possesses the power to drive change in social reality. The optimistic view of technology celebrates this transformation, considering it a symbol of human progress and a means to overcome failures in achieving comprehensive and democratic communication worldwide. On the other hand, the pessimistic view perceives technology as a tool for dominating weaker populations and controlling individuals by invading their personal lives and disrupting their social relationships. (Al-Ayyadi, 2009, p. 18)

Additionally, this study also relies on another media theory: the Democratic Participant Theory. This theory is one of the most recent and complex media theories, emerging from practical experience as a positive approach advocating for new forms of media organization. It developed as a reaction against the commercialization and monopolization of privately owned media. The theory emphasizes the selection and presentation of appropriate information and upholds the citizen's right to use communication tools for interaction and participation, particularly on a local level within their communities.

This theory rejects centralization and government control over the media while promoting pluralism, localism, interactivity, and horizontal communication. Media institutions operating under this framework focus more on social life and are directly controlled by their audience, providing opportunities for participation based on standards set by the public rather than by dominant authorities. Thus, this theory supports the citizen's right to access and utilize media platforms, establishing independent media entities free from government control.

The key principles of this theory can be summarized as follows:

- Individuals, groups, and minorities have the right to access and utilize media, and media should serve them according to their needs.
- Media organization and content should not be subject to centralized national control.
- The primary purpose of media is to serve its audience, not the organizations that own it or the professionals working within it.
- Local groups, organizations, and communities should have their own media outlets.
- Small-scale, interactive, and participatory media platforms are preferable to large-scale professional media that disseminates content in a one-way flow. (Al-Mashaqba, 2014, pp. 210-211)

1.4. Forms of Citizen Journalism in Algeria

Several forms of participatory or citizen journalism can be distinguished in the Algerian context. In many ways, it does not differ from its counterpart in Western countries.

The first form: This is represented by traditional media outlets (such as Echourouk TV, Ennahar TV, Dzair TV), which extend their content by integrating audience participation. This is achieved by allowing viewers to send topics, photos, videos, or testimonies, which are then either broadcast on television or published on the channel's website.

The second form: This form of citizen journalism is manifested through the creation of independent websites or the establishment of social media accounts (especially on Facebook, which is the most popular platform). These initiatives are often led by former journalists, typically former correspondents for newspapers or news agencies, who rely on citizen contributions from various social groups (such as employees, youth, and other segments of society) as sources of news.

The third form: Citizen journalism in Algeria also appears through the creation of websites or social media accounts——most notably on Facebook——by passionate citizens who are interested in local affairs and enthusiastic about journalism. (Abel, 2016)

The reliance of the media elite on citizen journalism during news coverage

The recent technological revolution has led to the emergence of a new virtual society characterized by several distinctive features. It enables rapid communication between millions of users, leveraging the "ubiquitous" feature that has transformed users of these platforms into live cameras capable of providing instant and exclusive coverage of events across various fields. The process of sending and receiving information now takes place through internet applications and social media platforms, which serve as communication tools, while modern technologies act as mediums that facilitate the collection and transmission of data in different formats—written, audio, or audiovisual.

As a result, the media landscape has shifted to a new phase, where the recipient has become the most important element in the communication and media process. Today, thanks to new media and communication tools, the audience has become a strategic and crucial source for exclusive news. Traditional mass media—including print journalism, radio, and television—now rely on user-generated content captured and shared by new media users. These individuals act as eyewitnesses on the ground, equipped with their own tools for journalistic coverage. They utilize Facebook as a social networking platform and smartphones connected to the internet as technical tools for capturing, transmitting, and disseminating data and information.

Since late 2013, when 3G mobile services were launched in Algeria, followed by the introduction of 4G high-speed internet in late 2016, these modern technologies have significantly contributed to the emergence of citizen journalism. This phenomenon has been embraced by users of these digital platforms, who are keen on covering events, amplifying their voices, and representing their surrounding communities, ensuring that their messages reach various traditional media outlets.

As a result, traditional media have resorted to adopting citizen-generated content to cover various events and issues, either as primary or secondary material. Several factors have driven this shift: the lack of reporters and journalists in certain areas where events unfold, restrictions on obtaining press permits, security risks and threats faced by journalists, as well as the challenges and obstacles they encounter in reaching the scene of an event.

Additionally, during emergency situations such as wars, bombings, uprisings, natural disasters, and other social issues, citizens—who are directly involved in these events—have become crucial sources of on-the-ground reporting. Consequently, traditional media outlets have increasingly relied on content produced by amateurs and ordinary citizens who are close to the scene.

2. Motivations or Reasons for Media Elites' Reliance on Citizen Journalism in News Coverage

- Speed in obtaining information and news without obstacles.

- Incorporation of multimedia elements such as images, audio, and video, which help in documenting events.

- Free source of news and information.

- Greater freedom of speech and expression, especially as many TV channels now rely on live broadcasts of statements from citizen journalists or eyewitnesses.

- Accessibility from anywhere and at any time without requiring physical effort.

- Immediacy, allowing any citizen journalist to publish news at the moment it happens, directly from the scene.

- Continuous event tracking, as citizen journalists are often in close proximity to the events they report on.

- Some journalists have stated that their reliance on citizen journalism stems from a sense of responsibility toward citizens, aiming to alleviate their struggles and understand various social issues affecting the community.

- A trusted source for journalists, as it documents events through audio and visuals.

- Difficulties in achieving exclusivity, especially during unexpected or sudden events, making citizen journalism a valuable resource.

- Significant influence on the audience, as it offers diverse, in-depth, unusual, and unique content.

- A new reality worth monitoring by media professionals, as it has become a vital information source, driven by technological advancements and the activism of citizens and enthusiasts on social media platforms.

Therefore, researchers and professionals believe that the relationship between citizen journalism and traditional journalism is a complementary one. Historical experiences show that the survival of media outlets depends on their continuous adaptation and integration with evolving forms of journalism. Citizen journalism is not an alternative that can replace traditional media, nor is it a competitor; rather, it serves as a complementary tool to conventional journalism. Any media institution that fails to invest in this new form of journalism will inevitably lose a significant portion of its audience. Thus, the relationship between traditional media and citizen journalism is, for the most part, a collaborative one.

Dr. Intissar Abdul Razzaq, in his book on new media, highlights the pressing need for an active academic approach to enhance and refine these functions in alignment with modern media transformations. The media landscape has evolved beyond pluralism and has now reached the stage of active, real-time interactivity. Western and Arab researchers express full confidence that these developments mark the beginning of the decline of traditional media dominance, which was once controlled by ruling regimes. Additionally, this shift challenges one-way communication theories, where the communicator (journalist) dictates content to a passive, non-participatory audience (Ibrahim & Al-Samouk, 2011, p.192).

Citizen journalism also possesses numerous characteristics that contribute to enhancing journalists' expertise, refining their professional skills, and enabling them to act with complete professionalism in accordance with the technological demands imposed by this form of journalism. Consequently, experienced or professional journalists review and verify the information provided by citizen journalists through recognized methods, ensuring

adherence to professional standards and ethical values such as objectivity, accuracy, and integrity.

This, in turn, highlights the impact of citizen journalism on the professionalism of media elites when dealing with such sources, as it reinforces professional values and standards in journalism. Additionally, it fosters neutrality, which is essential for preserving social cohesion, safeguarding the integrity of journalism as a profession, and delivering content that benefits society and contributes to its progress. Ultimately, this allows professional journalists to strengthen their credibility and position among their audience.

3. Challenges Faced by the Media Elite Due to Their Reliance on Citizen Journalism:

- Impact on News Quality and Journalism Standards: Citizen journalism has influenced the type of events presented to the audience, which in turn affects the professionalism of journalists. In any democratic society, journalists are responsible for delivering information with accuracy, integrity, and fairness. Adhering to ethical and professional principles is crucial for journalism's success. However, journalists face external political, social, and legal factors that affect their professional performance, beyond the control of media institutions. These factors and ethical standards impose significant challenges when relying on citizen journalism as a source of information. Additionally, journalists experience constant pressure in digital environments, which require continuous updates and adaptation to keep up with events and satisfy the audience's growing demand for information.

- Quality Concerns: Citizen journalism often lacks professional writing and photography skills, impacting the quality of disseminated information. This, in turn, can negatively influence public taste and the credibility of journalism as a profession.

- Objectivity Issues: It is difficult for a citizen journalist at the heart of an event to remain objective and professional. Often, opinions are presented as facts, rumors turn into reports, and at times, citizen journalists may become tools for propaganda.

- Legal Implications: Professional journalists are protected by legal frameworks and press laws, while citizen journalists lack such legal protections. This raises concerns for media institutions in handling information and affects issues such as copyright protection and intellectual property rights.

- Credibility Challenges: Although some citizen journalists have gained credibility and popularity, much of the content shared online lacks accuracy and reliability. If traditional and digital media outlets fail to verify information properly, this could damage their reputation and audience trust.

- Censorship and Government Restrictions: In many Arab countries, online journalists face internet restrictions, high costs of access, and even the risk of government arrests.

- Threats to Public Interest: Citizen journalism can pose risks to public welfare due to its fast-paced nature in spreading rumors.

- Spread of Misinformation: Citizen journalism has become a breeding ground for misinformation and fabricated images. It often lacks basic journalistic standards and professionalism in news reporting. Furthermore, the digital space is chaotic, filled with information overload, linguistic deterioration, and a decline in ethical values. Additionally, there are security risks, including the promotion of violence, extremist ideologies, racism, and other harmful content.

- Need for Caution: Given these challenges, dealing with citizen journalism and its sources requires extreme caution and thorough fact-checking.

Recommendations:

There is no doubt that citizen journalism has imposed a new media reality by all standards, becoming an essential tool for completing the media landscape, particularly in areas where journalists cannot access events or where media organizations lack a network of correspondents. Therefore, it is crucial for concerned authorities to establish guidelines and

ethical codes to regulate the use of citizen journalism as a source of information on one hand and to monitor its activities on the other, ensuring social order and preventing chaos.

- Developing citizen journalism due to its significant role in enhancing freedom of expression, recognizing its importance as an integral part of new media, which has surpassed traditional media in influence and audience engagement. Moreover, it has empowered citizens by making them feel like active contributors to news reporting and event coverage.

- Utilizing the skills of citizen journalists by encouraging media institutions to integrate their contributions through training workshops that emphasize journalistic ethics, publishing rights, and privacy concerns.

- Organizing training workshops led by the Ministry of Information and relevant institutions to equip citizen journalists with the necessary journalistic skills, proper handling of media equipment, and effective communication with both the public and traditional media outlets.

- Ensuring that media experts and specialists monitor the content produced by citizen journalists, as it may contain inaccuracies or misinformation due to their lack of professional training and limited knowledge of journalism standards.

- Establishing ethical and legal frameworks to regulate citizen journalism activities, thereby preserving public interest and social stability while imposing strict penalties for violations to prevent disorder.

- Building a cooperative relationship between media institutions and citizen journalists to create a more comprehensive and balanced media landscape.

- Encouraging journalists to adhere to ethical publishing standards, ensuring accuracy, objectivity, and fact-checking when using information provided by citizen journalists.

- Providing professional training for journalists to help them effectively engage with citizen journalism, particularly in covering sensitive issues.

- Cautioning against fake identities and unofficial pages operated by citizen journalists on social media platforms.

- Avoiding the publication of confidential national security information shared by citizen journalists, relying instead on official sources.

CONCLUSION :

Based on the findings of this study, we conclude that the process of transmitting news and information from social media platforms by journalists and media professionals, regardless of their specialization, has become a real and professional necessity. However, this must be conducted ethically, ensuring the credibility of the information. These platforms often provide satisfaction and fulfillment for journalists seeking timely and diverse news sources. The relationship between citizen journalism and traditional journalism is always based on interaction and cooperation, as journalists can rely on citizen journalism as a valuable source of information during urgent events. Ultimately, citizen journalism has played a crucial role in supporting traditional media by reporting, analyzing, and disseminating news, reinforcing the complementary nature of both forms of journalism.

However, citizen journalists can never replace professional journalists, as citizen journalism lacks the editorial and professional media standards that govern traditional journalism. Nonetheless, this does not negate the phenomenon nor diminish its growing influence on social, political, and global movements. Today, for the first time in human history, we all have the power to transmit the truth, and it is our responsibility to safeguard this right with knowledge and wisdom.

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