Open source journalism

Toward an Integrative Conceptual Framework

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.Abstract

The turning point in the journalistic field comes with the birth of social Web 2.0. The public is now involved and every citizen can become media. Thus, we can say that Web 2.0 challenges the values and practices of journalism. In recent years, Journalism 2.0 or so-called "open source Journalism" has become primary communication media for a new generation of digitally aware users. Furthermore, this new form of journalism has recently become the focus of considerable interest and held an important position as powerful a platform for disseminating information and mobilizing citizens around the world. In this perspective, this study presents an integrative conceptual framework of this new form of journalism, based on three-dimensional approaches: socio-technical, communicational, and commercial, which can be applied systematically, in order to understanding factors affect users' intention to continue using it as one of new media platforms.

1. INTRODUCTION

The contemporary communication landscape has seen the emergence of new forms and modes of communication innumerable, thanks to the new digital technologies. These growing technologies have provided new avenues for the emergence of various media outlets, which have donned many labels including "*pro-am journalism, journalism 2.0, networked journalism* etc." In this view, this new form is generally based on Web 2.0 technologies or what calls the fourth revolution, in which interactive nature emerges as the most significant innovations in media[1]. Indeed, the turning point in the journalistic field comes with the birth of social Web 2.0. The public is now involved and every citizen can become media. Thus, we can say that Web 2.0 challenges the values and practices of journalism. In recent years, the journalistic profession has faced many challenges, for example, technological innovations that have significantly transformed the journalistic act. The switchover has substantially altered all stages of journalists' work, from information gathering to dissemination on all platforms. In addition, the consumption habits of news media have also changed dramatically.

Newly released figures indicate that more people now consume their news from online media outlets that outstripped traditional media. In this context, new media platforms have gained significant popularity, particularly in light of increasing the offer and demand of its services —especially in the societies where media is not free. In a few years, journalism 2.0, networked journalism or so-called "open source Journalism" is rapidly becoming an alternative platform to traditional media that have potential to identity formation, besides creating the collective consciousness of the general public. Also, it's becoming powerful tools for community building, combined with mobilizing citizens around the world. For example, the information obtained from these sites formed positive attitudes of younger generation toward political change during Egypt's revolution[2]. In this context, Roger (2011) concluded that networked journalism is an important factor in implementing recent Arab revolts[3].

Despite rapid developments in new media platforms, in addition to its growing popularity in general, there remains a particular need for innovative conceptual frameworks from which to approach these new media that pose new challenges in evaluating websites, in addition to measuring its effectiveness. In pursuit of this objective, this study offers an integrative conceptual framework for Journalism 2.0 or so-called "open source", using three conceptual approaches: socio-technical, communicational, and commercial. The main contribution of this research is that it formally develops a theoretical framework able to evaluate that new form of journalism from the structural interactions of the three aspects noted above.

2. OPEN SOURCE JOURNALISM

In this section, we will work to build our theoretical framework, which is to conceptualize our problematic by defining the main concepts used in this research and arranging them

2.1 Technology and press renewal

There is no doubt that access to global information via multiple and varied media, multimedia processing of information, interactivity and immediacy are all factors put forward by some authors to explain the role of the Internet media in the current changes. journalism. In fact, the advent of the web in media companies has made it possible to contemplate changes or even radical changes in organizational processes as well as in terms of online production and dissemination of information. From the beginning of the 2000s, Pavlik emphasized the leading role that the technologies of the Net could play in the transformations of journalism[4]. In the same perspective, Mark Deuze, showed the technological potential of the Internet and the prospect of a radical transformation towards online journalism that would be digital[5]. However, the unique features offered by online publishing, in terms of interactivity, hypertext writing, and media convergence, fueled the cyberjournalism free from the constraints of linear writing. The technology was then seen as an objective alliance to change the professional practices of journalism, and also intend to revolutionize journalism through Web 2.0[6].

2.2 New dimensions/practices

In the context of multi terminology that used today such as web 2.0, social media, and user-generated content (UGC), valuable features of this new form of journalism can be determined through two perspectives as:

2.2.1 *The first dimension: Technological*

This dimension is one of three main dimensions that is jointly formed web 2.0[7], which refers to scripting and presentation technologies used to render the site and allow user interaction. Cormode and Krishnamurty (2008) pointed out that technological dimension involve some of the important features include: (1) Users as first-class entities in the system, with prominent profile pages, including such features as: age, sex, location, testimonials, or comments about the user by other users, (2) The ability to form connections between users, via links to other users who are «friends,» membership in «groups» of various kinds, and subscriptions or RSS feeds of «updates» from other users; and (3) The ability to post content in many forms: photos, videos, blogs, comments and ratings on other users' content, tagging of own or others' content, and some ability to control privacy and sharing[8].

2.2.2 *The second dimension: Social*

This dimension is one of the main criteria that distinguish this new form of journalism via virtual communities, specifically, with the availability of broadband services, such as user-generated content, where users add value by issuing comments disseminating their opinions, share their experiences and knowledge with other users. Vossen (2009) considers that online social networks, another form of mass socialization. In sum, we can say that this new form of journalism, in particular, can be differentiated from traditional journalism by a number of unique affordances, such as connectivity, collaborative Information discovery and sharing, content creation, and Information aggregation and

content. In this context the main categories of Journalism 2.0, networked journalism, or so-called "open source Journalism— especially, under so-called «*the wisdom of crowds*» and/or «*collective intelligence*», could be summarized as seen in the Table below.

Table 1. Types of journalism 2.0[9]

Category	Description	Type of engagement
Embedded links	Links to sources of information for news reports	Allows readers to double-check the accuracy of reporting by going to source material
Blogs	Independent blogs, news media blogs, reporter blogs	Allows readers to comment on news reports both through blog creation and via comments on blog posts; provide links to other sites, documents to increase trust
Micro-blogs	Twitter feeds	In 160 characters or less, news outlets can disseminate reports (with micro-links to back to the Website), ask readers for help in covering stories, listen to reader's reactions to coverage
Facebook fan page	Social-network pages that offer updates to "fans"	Disseminate reports, engage in conversation with fans, allow readers to discuss their reactions to reports
Ushahidi map	The platform provides user-generated mapping	Allow the audience to SMS, form submit, email or twitter information to compile information during the crisis; more reports from the same location acts as verification.
User video reports	YouTube, Vimeo, news sites	Users can cover news vents by using their video cameras, cell phones
Crowdsourcing	A generic term meaning using many users to cover one issue	Users collectively cover an event or issue; results are combined and analyzed by some central authority.

2.3 Valuable features

The technological advances and the paradigm shift in new media in recent years have led to a communication revolution, where open source journalism or so-called « Journalism 2.0 « are a recent trend in this revolution. Recently, journalism 2.0, networked journalism, or so-called « Open source journalism « have quickly become one of the fundamental building blocks which allow people to connect and interact with each other without the substantial cost or without the media gatekeepers.

Open source journalism or so-called « Journalism 2.0 « refers to the use of new technologies in collaborative news making and news analysis by laypersons with (minimal) web publishing skills[10]. Some scholars have called this new type of reporting "networked journalism," with the idea that audiences can work with professionals to create effective, compelling journalism[11]. Jarvis (2006) point out that, "Networked journalism" takes into account the collaborative nature of journalism now: professionals and amateurs (see Figure 1) working together to get the real story[12].
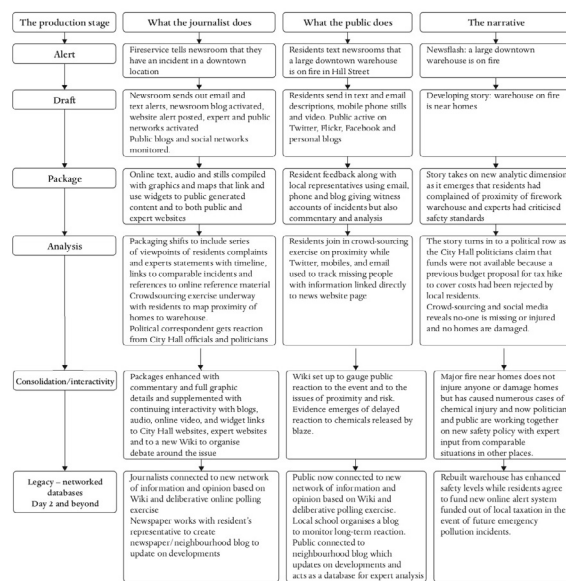
Figure 1. A Networked journalism narrative[13]

In this view, Beckett (2010) point out that networked journalism offers four benefits for journalism: editorial diversity, distributing

news in different ways, relating audiences and subjects to create new editorial and ethical relationship, and increase trust and credibility. Both Lewis and Usher (2013) state that open source offers the opportunity for technologists and journalists together, besides providing a new framework that makes journalism more relevant in a participatory, digital culture[14]. This new news discourse sees collaboration between professional journalists and amateurs integrated into the culture and ethics of journalism production[15].

2.4 The New Evolving Media Ecosystem

In the new evolving media ecosystem[16]»(see Figure 2), which Gillmor describes as "journalism's next wave[17]", journalistic software holds an important place in the contemporary era. This type of journalism represents an increase in the level of productivity in the processing of ongoing cases and significant savings in the costs of printing, mailing, and other paper storage. Journalism is a profession that is usually highly regulated with jobs that can be very well paid. Furthermore, journalism 2.0 describes increased opportunities for interaction with the public, a remarkable deepening of expertise through bloggers and other research tools, and near-immediate reactions, which can relay events, even in some repressive countries. The public can thus take advantage of his right of expression, which constitutes the very foundation of democracy.
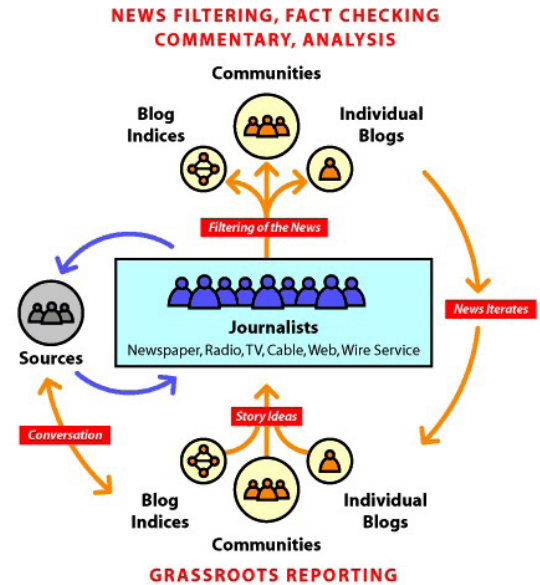

Figure 2. The emerging media ecosystem

In sum, we can distinguish between participatory journalism and traditional journalism in sub-points below.

• Verifiable sources

The main criterion of open-source journalism is giving access to verifiable sources of information, in the form of associated documentary material, through a link or incorporation, to statements in the journalistic narrative, including all oral or email interviews with individuals or raw materials for sources anonymous. On the other hand, with traditional journalism, the public deprived of the possibility of verifying the veracity of the facts which are delivered to them. For example, exposing the facts about allegations of use of

chemical weapons in Iraq, and justifying the war against it.

- **Active engagement**

The media landscape has dramatically altered in the 21st century. Today, when talking about the added value of open source journalism, we immediately think of the active citizen who produces and consume information, besides contributing corrections, questions, and facts[18], compared to traditional journalism, which the producers «gatekeepers" create news and audiences consume it. In this respect, Jean-François Tétu (2008, p.10) state that: «*This type of journalism that not only gives people news and information, but helps them do their job and engage in social responsibility not as spectators, but as participants*"[19].

- **Convergence of production and consumption**

In fact, we can say that many of the changes arising within this new media ecology can be captured through the concept of "*prosumption*" which defined as the collapse or convergence of production and consumption[20]. As a result, we have seen a revolution driven by the more active participation of users, in particular with the user-generated content revolution that is blurring the distinction between professional and amateur content[21], along with enabling entirely new types of creative media production. In this respect, Mark Poster (1995) argued that the main difference between old media and new media was that new media was 'active', whereas old media was 'passive'.

- **Reconfigured the news markets**

There is no doubt that the second generation of the Web facilitates user-generated content (UGC) which gained substantial momentum in its adoption as a key resource for journalists to get stories and to develop news reports. Besides, users are no longer only consumers, that is to say «the consumer becomes producer and distributor[22]». As a result, society is shifting from mainstream markets to individual and fragmented tastes, where users have a more active role in the media value chain[23], their ability to generate different forms of content. In this context Park and Choi (2015) note that each individual will act as a news provider, news consumer, and new medium by simply using network journalism[24] (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. News Delivery of Journalism 2.0

3. RESEACH FRAMEWORK

Based on the above discussion, an integrative conceptual framework was proposed. The framework was developed based on three-dimensional approaches: socio-technical, communicational, and commercial[25]. The structural framework is illustrated in Figure below.
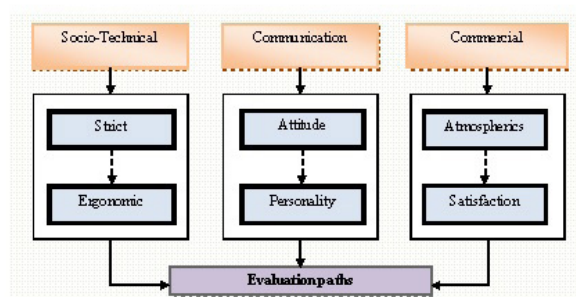
Figure 4. Conceptual Framework

1.1 Conceptualization Socio-Technical Approach

The term "socio-technical" emphasize the interrelationship between social and technological factors[26] in understanding any information system. While the technical aspects focus on the processes, tasks, and technologies to produce designated output, the social system takes into account the interaction between the technology itself, the people who use it and the organizational and environmental context in which it is embedded[27], in order to improve the quality of the system and enhance its performance. Kling et al., (2003) point out that there are several fundamental assumptions underlie use socio-technical methodology, which includes (1) the social and the technological are not meaningfully separable, (2) Theories of social behavior…should influence technical design choices, and (3) system participants are embedded in multiple, overlapping, and non-technologically mediated

social relationships, and therefore may have multiple, often conflicting, commitments[28]. Therefore, a socio-technical approach provides a useful framework to help us understand the way in which technology is adopted and used on journalism 2.0.

1.1.1 Evaluation paths

With this initial approach, journalism 2.0 is analyzed as a system of information which provides opportunities for communication, hosting of content and applications- not only between online users but also between providers and users. In this case, this approach can be divided into two major paths like the following.

1.1.1.1 *Technical attributes*

This aspect focuses on evaluating user acceptance of information technology. In other words, it explores the relationship between the technology acceptance by end users and the use of new media platforms[29]. In this respect, the technology acceptance model (TAM) introduced by Davis (1989) has been recognized as one of the most powerful models to explain new media platforms usage. The TAM is founded on the Theory of Reasoned Action[30] (TRA) and Theory of Planned Behavior[31] (TPB), which aims "*to provide a basis for tracing the impact of external variables on internal beliefs, attitudes, and intentions*[32]". In spite of the TAM is considered a useful model to better explains the adoption of the technology, its constructs are the incapacity to account on their own for the overall success of websites. In this respect, Legris et al (2003) suggested that TAM model should be integrated into a larger

one with variables related to both human and social change processes[33]. In this respect, Lin (2007) has extended technology acceptance model, where found that Information quality, system quality, and service quality and offline activities are main variables that influence the sustainability of virtual communities[34].

1.1.1.2   *Functional attributes*

The second aspect refers to the functional features that could play a positive role in influencing online user behavior, and also reflect success criteria of the website as a whole. Indeed, these features have been consistently found to be similar across various previous studies (Table 2).

Table 2. Review of the criteria of Website success

Author(s)	Category	Description
Aladwani & Palvia, 2001[1]	Content	Usefulness; completeness; clarity; uniqueness; ect.
	Appearance	Attractiveness; organization; proper use of language; etc
	Technical adequacy	Security; ease of navigation; customization; interactivity; etc....
Reix, 2003[2]	Information	A site's body of knowledge.
	Usability	Opportunities for active engagement by a site's users.
Gladney et al.,2007[3]	Content	A site's body of knowledge.
	Interactivity	Opportunities for active engagement by a site's users.
	Look	Elements that produce a satisfying visual experience for users.
	Navigation	A site's structure/organization of content.
	Functionality	A site's use of technology.
	Community	A site's engagement with target audience needs and wants.

1   Aladwani, A. M and Palvia, P. C. (2001) Developing and validating an instrument for measuring user-perceived web quality, *Information & Management*, 39, pp. 467-476.

2   Reix R. (2003). Evaluation des sites Web: nouvelles pratiques, anciennes théories, 8ème colloque de l'AIM Grenoble 23 et 24 Mai, pp 1-12

3   Gladney, G.A, Shapiro, I, and Gastaldo, J. (2007). Online Editors Rate Web News Quality criteria, *Newspaper Research Journal*, 28 (1), pp.55-69

Information/Content

During the last years, much work has been done to build frameworks for content quality. In fact, the factors determine content quality vary from two perspectives- the producers and the customers. While producers focus on the measurable, objective properties of a product, customers on the other hand focus on the usability of a product for their subjective purpose[38]. Research has consistently demonstrated that the generic features of information content are the Key success factors in evaluating its quality[39], that have been consistently found to be similar across various previous studies (see Table 2). However, Information quality within a web-based environment considered the major source to meet the user's expectation, and then building relations between the potential users. Godwin (2008) argues that the content of the website can have a major impact on channel use and overall satisfaction[40], and hence can lead to encouraging repeat visits, and continue to use the services of the website[41].

- *Usability*

Usability is a quality objective that related to user's friendliness. Indeed, usability reflects the ability to quickly navigate to ensure meet the needs of end users[42] . However, it can represent a major factor that determines website quality[43]. In that sense, Frijters and Velamuri (2009) point out that "*usability to the website makes it cheaper to provide high-quality news and to disseminate it via the web*[44]".

- *Design*

In the environment of the internet, the design of websites plays an important role in attracting

and keeping users. Furthermore, the mode in which Web site is presented is a key factor for its success[45]. In this respect, Tan and Wei (2006) point out that "*a good Website design would generally lead to better user performance*[46]". From this perspective, the deficiency of website design can result in frustration and make a negative impression of the website quality to the users, and therefore, they probably not access the site again.

- *Organization*

This dimension refers to the ways that help any user to find the needed information and news within a reasonable time. Therefore, this aspect is related to the structure of website[47], which is composed of several factors such as consistency, linkages, etc. Further, the main objective of this dimension is to create a long lasting impression of the website, additionally to enhance transmit news and information to the targeted audience.

## 1.2 Conceptualization Communication Approach

The ecology of communication refers to the communication process in context. There are three dimensions to the ecology of communication: (1) an information technology, (2) a communication format, (3) a social activity[48]. The ecological model of communication, as shown in Figure 6, attempts to provide a platform on which these issues can be explored. It asserts that communication occurs in the intersection of four fundamental constructs: communication between people (creators and consumers) is mediated by messages which are created using language

within media; consumed from media and interpreted using language.
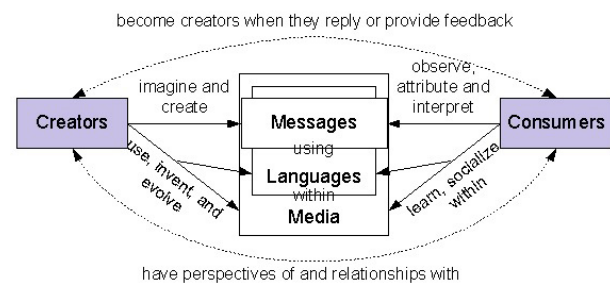
Figure 5. Ecological Model of the Communication Process

This approach provides a new meaningful approach and a solid theoretical background to study journalism 2.0. For example, consumer shifted to online news consumption could be an important starting point to understand the relationship between online news and its consumers – namely of supply and demand under the multiple media platforms. In sum, this approach consists of three main layers (Figure 6): Firstly, a social layer which consists of people and the groups into which they may be organized; Secondly, a discursive layer, which includes the communication themes and content discussed and exchanged between members of the communicative ecology, both mediated and unmediated by technological tools; Finally, a technological layer consists of devices and connecting media that enable communication and social interaction.
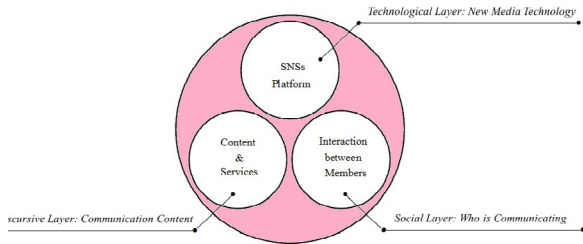
Figure 6. Communicative Ecology

The adoption of journalism 2.0 as new methods of communication has enabled marketers to reach new markets in ways that are very different from traditional media. For example, the ability to reach a target audience at any speed without the substantial cost of advertising or without the media gatekeepers. Besides, it has fundamentally changed the ways of users to access the news and information they require. As a consequence, media platforms can be evaluated by two main aspects.

1.2.1 Evaluation paths

Journalism 2.0 as a new communication tool can be evaluated by two main aspects. While the first one related to the concept of attitude toward the site; the second based on analysis the website in terms of personality.

1.2.1.1 Attitude

With the ever-increasing use of online media besides the growth of Journalism 2.0 as a new communication medium at an unprecedented form, it has become increasingly important to understanding of how users are using these new media platforms. In this respect, Chen and Wells (1999) state that attitude is one of the most-frequently-utilized measures for website value and its effectiveness[49]. Besides, it plays more significant roles in a website success and shaping user responses to this website. Hwang and McMillan (2002) found that interactivity and involvement are two key measures that may help us to better understand attitude toward the web site[50]. While Lynch (2008) states the importance of usability as one of the key quality factors that have a bearing on user intention to use news websites. Therefore, users' tend to be loyal to news websites they find easy to use.

1.2.1.2 Website personality

Website personality defined as "the set of traits encompassing human characteristics and information technology features associated with a website». Furthermore, this term related to 'brand' quality, that allows consumers to express his conception of himself and" to symbolic benefits of consumption[51]. In this context, Chen and Rodgers (2006) cite that website personality differs from brand personality by the way in which it is built, notably through the site interface and design[52]. Besides, they integrate rational elements into it – perceived use and perceived ease of use – as proposed by Davis (1989). Therefore, they underline the advantages of modeling website personality on human personality, implying that designers should talk into account users' motivations, and to meet their needs.

1.1.1 Conceptualization Commercial Approach

Open source journalism presents opportunities for social interaction and facilitating a dialogue and conversation between users worldwide.

In that sense, open source journalism allows internet users the ability to add user-generated content such as comments, feedback, ratings, or their own dedicated pages. Importantly, it has also allowed users to build or break a marketing brand.

1.1.1.1 Evaluation paths

1.1.1.1.1   Atmospherics

Recent studies of Web atmospheric could be categorized into two approaches: the hygiene -based approach and motivators-based approach[53].The hygiene- based approach relies on objective measurements of a Web site. Indeed, this approach consists of functional factors such as navigation, privacy, security, surfing activity, impartiality, and information content. So, the presence of these factors makes a Website useful and serviceable, while their absence causes users' dissatisfaction. The motivators -based approach relies on subjective measurements of web site content. This implies that this approach focuses on users' perception of website quality and their ability to maintain a positive attitude toward specific websites through several elements such as credibility, and visual appearance. Table 3 presents briefly some of the most important studies conducted in the field of web-atmospherics.

Table 3. Summary of key web-atmospherics studies[54]

1.1.1.1.2   Satisfaction

The concept of satisfaction has been studied through many different types of research by various frameworks and models. In this context, According to Behyar et al (2011), innovation,

ease of use, trustworthy and customer support are the most important factors for satisfaction[55], besides information content, and user involvement (Liang et al.,2006). In fact, these satisfaction factors mostly come from the feeling of the site design and its functional attributes[56] . Therefore, website designers trying to personalize their website profile pages and giving their users' as much service as possible services, which in turn helps them in improving users' satisfaction, which is the key driver of user loyalty[57].

4.   POTENTIAL LINKS BETWEEN MODEL   DIMENSIONS

Based on the above discussion, we seek to present the potential links between the approaches proposed, in order to evaluation of a social networking site in all its aspects socio-technical, communication, and commercial.

1.1   Social presence

In light of increasing new technologies, which has enabled online users to communicate with one another, promoting people's perception of social presence in media environments has become an important issue. Rogers and Lea (2005) state that "presence can be described as a multidimensional concept, which can be divided into two broad categories—social and physical presence[58] . In that sense, promoting users' perception of social presence in media environments has become an important issue, due to that the main purpose of virtual worlds is to provide a social environment for communication and interaction among their users. Therefore, interactive nature emerges

as the most significant innovations in online environments, which in turn affect users' attitudes toward new media preforms usage, enhance users' experience, and ensure revisit the website[59]. In this respect, sense of belonging is inherent in the virtual world as the crucial factor to influence the members' loyalty[60].

1.2 Media richness

In the context of social media, journalism 2.0 has become primary tools for disseminating information and mobilizing citizens around the world. Hence, we can say that media richness theory hold an important position. Further, media with greater richness can convey greater amounts of information, as well as reduce uncertainty and vagueness in communication[61]. In this perspective, this theory is based upon four criteria for determining the information richness of communication media immediate: feedback, transmit multiple cues, language variety, and personal focus[62]. In addition, Zmud et al. (1990) posited three attributes, where information acquisition, information richness "social presence", and new computer-mediated channels in order to differentiated communication channels[63].

In sum, the media richness theory is useful in providing rich information, which considered as the main source of differentiation between one website or another. In this respect, it can provide a good approach to understand the quality of journalism 2.0 from the user perspective—especially in light of the focus on a three-dimensional: users' needs, user's prior experience, and skill and comfort in using a medium[64].

1.3 Familiarity and trust

In the specialized literature, several papers have proved that the users' familiarity with websites influences positively on the perceived quality. Lowry et al., (2007) point out that familiarity has a positive impact on increasing credibility and trust of a Website. In the field of electronic media[65], Flavia'n and Gurrea (2008) confirmed that familiarity has a greater impact on readers to read newspapers web sites[66]. Besides, trust has increasingly become a significant issue not only in website development but also as a key ingredient for building relationships with users. However, both trust and quality are important, related constructs. In this respect, Fogg and Tseng (1999) point out that: "*trust indicates a positive belief about the perceived reliability of, dependability of, and confidence in a person, object, or processs*[67]" (p.81). However, Dwyer et al., (2007) found that the level of trust differs between users, for instance, Facebook members were more trusting of the site, and more willing to include identifying information in their profile comparing to MySpace members[68].

5. CONCLUSIONS

In fact, increasing dependence on technology for basic communication at an unprecedented form also highlights the importance of a practical support is required regarding the study of various new media outlets by abandoning traditional methods and adopts new methods and tools. This study offers an integrative conceptual framework for Journalism 2.0 or so-called "open source", using three conceptual approaches: socio-technical, communicational,

and commercial. In this respect, our model outline constructs of based on a systematic review of the literature, which differs from a narrative review. While a narrative review provides an overview of the content available on a given topic, a systematic review is more narrowly focused and seeks to assemble, critically appraise or evaluate and synthesize the results of primary studies in an integrative approach[69]. The main contribution of this research is that it formally develops an integrative theoretical framework, which integrates conceptualization theoretical and practical application respectively, in order to evaluate that new form of journalism.

The issue of evaluation new media platforms have recently become the focus of considerable interest and held an important position for both researchers and practitioners. Thus, we believe deeper new studies are needed not only to re-conceptualize quality as a critical factor of online success, but also to measure what makes these platforms effective. We hope that this model could be beginning worthwhile for the re-conceptualization of journalism and social media studies, by considering other factors or by applying it in different contexts in search of more general conclusions. For example, future studies could shed new light on contextual factors: such as user participation, and the role of technology, which achieve effective communication between media and users. In addition, we hope that each concept identified in this model carefully operationalize in future studies.

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