

Influence Of Social Media On Journalists' Work Patterns In The Digital Era

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Abstract. *This study investigates the influence of social media on journalists' work patterns in the digital era. The rapid development of digital platforms has transformed how journalists collect, process, and disseminate information, as well as interact with their audience. Using a quantitative research design with descriptive and associative approaches, data were collected from 30 journalism students who had completed practical journalistic activities. A structured questionnaire was administered online, and data were analyzed using simple linear regression with SPSS Statistic 27. The results show that social media significantly affects journalists' work patterns, with a positive relationship indicated by a regression coefficient of 0.734 and a determination coefficient (R^2) of 0.518. Findings suggest that social media enhances the speed of information acquisition, facilitates real-time news dissemination, increases interaction with audiences, and supports multitasking in digital journalism. The study concludes that social media is an integral tool that reshapes journalistic practices, demanding both technical skills and professional ethics. These insights highlight the necessity for journalists to adapt to digital transformations to maintain efficiency, credibility, and accuracy in news production.*

Keywords: *Social Media, Journalists' Work Patterns, Digital Journalism, Digital Transformation, Journalism Ethics.*

INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology in recent years has brought significant changes to how people access, process, and disseminate information. The increasing digital transformation is supported by the growing use of the internet and mobile devices, allowing information access to occur quickly, easily, and without spatial or temporal limitations. According to the Digital 2025 report published by We Are Social and Meltwater (2025), the number of internet and social media users continues to increase annually, making digital media the primary means for the public to fulfill their information and communication needs. Social media has evolved into a communication platform that is not only used for social interaction but also as a medium for public information dissemination. Platforms such as Instagram, X (Twitter), Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube allow users to produce, share, and access information in real-time. According to Kapoor et al. (2022), social media has changed communication patterns by creating a more interactive, participatory, and networked digital communication environment. This shift has altered how people consume information, moving from reliance on conventional media to faster and more accessible digital media.

The development of social media has significantly impacted journalism. Journalism, as an activity involving the collection, processing, verification, and dissemination of information to the public, has transformed due to digital technology. Nielsen and Fletcher (2023) note that social

media has become an integral part of the modern journalistic ecosystem, serving as a source of information, a news distribution channel, and a medium for journalist-audience interaction. Social media has accelerated the news production process compared to conventional journalistic practices. Today, social media is not only used for publishing news but also as an initial information source during news coverage. Important events are often first discovered through public posts on social media before being reported by mass media. Newman et al. (2024) note that many media organizations use social media to monitor developing issues and obtain early information about events, showing that social media has become inseparable from journalistic activities in the digital era.

In addition to serving as an information source, social media has changed the relationship between journalists and their audiences. While communication in conventional media is one-way, social media enables two-way or even multidirectional communication. Audiences can comment, critique, provide feedback, or share information published by journalists. According to Eldridge and Franklin (2022), interaction through social media fosters closer relationships between media and the public, increasing audience engagement in public communication processes. This change directly affects journalists' work patterns.

Journalists are required to work more quickly in obtaining information, verifying, processing data, and delivering news to the public. Speed has become a key factor in digital media competition. However, the demand for speed often creates challenges in maintaining information accuracy. Wardle and Derakhshan (2023) note that the spread of misinformation, disinformation, and hoaxes via social media is one of the greatest challenges journalists face today. Therefore, information verification and digital literacy are essential competencies for journalists in the digital era.

The development of social media also drives changes in the skills required of journalists. In addition to writing news, journalists must master various digital skills such as photography, videography, multimedia editing, social media management, and digital data analysis. Posetti et al. (2024) state that modern journalists must possess multiskill abilities to adapt to increasingly technology-based media environments. This shows that digital transformation not only changes the media used but also alters the competencies required in the journalism profession.

On the other hand, the use of social media provides flexibility in journalists' work patterns. Coverage, communication with sources, and news distribution can be conducted from various locations without being confined to a newsroom. Nevertheless, this flexibility also increases the demand for professionalism, as journalists must maintain credibility, accuracy, and journalistic ethics in every work process. Social media plays a major role in influencing journalists' work patterns in the digital era. The changes affect not only the speed of information dissemination but also news gathering processes, audience interaction, digital skills, and challenges in maintaining information quality. Therefore, research on the influence of social media on journalists' work patterns in the digital era is important to understand how media affects modern journalistic practices.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media

Social media is an internet-based platform that allows individuals to communicate, share information, and build virtual social networks. It represents a significant advancement in communication technology, transforming the way humans interact and exchange information. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2022), social media applications enable users to create, share, and exchange various forms of information interactively through digital networks. The main characteristics of social media include interactivity, rapid information dissemination, user participation, and easy accessibility. Interactivity enables two-way or multidirectional

communication. Newman et al. (2024) note that social media allows users to build broad communication networks and actively participate in information production and distribution. While social media spreads information quickly, it carries risks, as not all content is verified. Digital literacy is therefore essential for users to evaluate information critically. In journalism, social media has become a key part of modern practice, serving both as a distribution medium and as a source for initial news reporting. According to the Reuters Institute Digital News Report (2024), social media is among the most widely used sources for digital journalistic activities. Nevertheless, challenges arise, including the spread of hoaxes, disinformation, and poor-quality information, requiring journalists to verify information accurately.

Journalism

Journalism encompasses activities related to collecting, processing, writing, and disseminating information to the public through various mass media channels. It involves not only recording events but also selecting, interpreting, and presenting information in an understandable manner. Wahl-Jorgensen (2021) defines journalism as a professional activity aiming to provide accurate, relevant, and reliable information to the public. Normative journalism theory emphasizes that journalistic practice must follow principles of ethics, social responsibility, independence, and public interest. In the digital era, gatekeeping has changed, as social media allows rapid information dissemination without strict selection. Kovach and Rosenstiel (2021) highlight core journalism elements: truth, verification, independence, transparency, and accountability. Journalism serves as information delivery, education, entertainment, and social control, monitoring public policies and social phenomena. Hermida (2022) describes *social journalism*, in which social media becomes integral to modern journalistic practice. Journalists now act as curators, responsible for filtering and verifying information shared on digital platforms.

Journalists' Work Patterns in the Digital Era

Digital Transformation Theory explains the fundamental changes in journalists' work patterns as a consequence of the development and integration of digital technologies into the journalistic process. According to Pavlik (2021), digital technology has transformed news production into a process that is faster, more flexible, interactive, and increasingly oriented toward real-time information delivery. Changes in journalists' work patterns encompass the entire process of journalism, beginning with information and data collection, verification and processing, news writing and production, multimedia integration, and finally the dissemination of information through various digital platforms. In the conventional media environment, these processes tend to follow a relatively linear workflow, whereas digital transformation has created a more dynamic and accelerated working system. Journalists can collect information, conduct interviews, monitor developments, write news, and distribute content from different locations without being physically present in a traditional newsroom. The availability of smartphones, digital cameras, cloud-based applications, social media, and online communication platforms has therefore increased the mobility and flexibility of journalists in responding to rapidly changing events.

The transformation of journalistic work also requires journalists to develop broader competencies and adapt to increasingly complex professional demands. Digital-era journalists are no longer required to focus solely on writing and reporting but are expected to perform multiple tasks, including photography, videography, audio recording, multimedia editing, data processing, content optimization, and management of news distribution across digital platforms. This multitasking capability enables journalists to produce news in various formats, such as text, photographs, videos, infographics, podcasts, and interactive content, according to the characteristics of digital audiences. However, the acceleration of the news production process

does not eliminate the obligation to uphold fundamental journalistic principles, including accuracy, verification, objectivity, fairness, and ethical responsibility. Thus, digital transformation should not merely be understood as the adoption of new technological tools, but also as a broader transformation of journalists' competencies, professional practices, workflows, and relationships with audiences. In this context, Digital Transformation Theory provides a relevant theoretical framework for analyzing how technological developments reshape journalists' work patterns and professional practices in the contemporary digital media environment.

Social Journalism Theory

Alfred Hermida's Social Journalism Theory explains that the development of digital technology and social media has fundamentally transformed the practice of journalism. In the conventional journalism model, journalists function primarily as information providers, while audiences act as passive recipients of news. However, the emergence of social media has changed this one-way communication pattern into a more dynamic, interactive, and participatory process. Audiences are no longer positioned merely as consumers of information but can also become active participants who produce, distribute, comment on, and respond to news content. Through platforms such as social networking sites, online communities, and other digital media, information can be exchanged rapidly and continuously. This condition allows journalists to obtain information, monitor public reactions, identify emerging issues, and communicate directly with audiences. Consequently, social media has become an important component of contemporary journalism because it facilitates broader public participation and creates opportunities for audiences to contribute to the news production process.

Furthermore, Social Journalism Theory emphasizes that the integration of social media into journalism influences not only the relationship between journalists and audiences but also the way journalists perform their professional roles. Journalists are required to adapt to a media environment characterized by speed, openness, interaction, and continuous information flows. Feedback from audiences can be obtained directly through comments, shares, reactions, and discussions, allowing journalists to evaluate public responses and develop news content that is more relevant to audience interests and needs. At the same time, journalists must maintain professional standards, including accuracy, verification, objectivity, and ethical responsibility, because the rapid dissemination of information through social media also increases the risk of misinformation and unverified content. Therefore, this theory provides an appropriate conceptual framework for understanding how social media has transformed journalistic work patterns in the digital era, particularly in relation to audience participation, information production, communication interaction, and the adaptation of journalists to an increasingly participatory media environment.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative method based on the positivist philosophy. According to Sugiyono (2017), quantitative research is used to examine a population or specific sample with the aim of testing hypotheses through data collection using research instruments and statistical analysis. The approach used was a survey, collecting data via questionnaires to obtain information about respondents' perceptions of a particular phenomenon. The study aimed to investigate the influence of social media on journalists' work patterns in the digital era. A cross-sectional design was applied, where data collection occurred once during a specific period. The population consisted of 30 journalism students actively using social media. A saturated sampling technique was used, including all members of the population (Sugiyono, 2017).

The study involved two variables: social media as the independent variable (X) and journalists' work patterns as the dependent variable (Y). The social media variable was

measured using indicators such as information speed, interactivity, accessibility, and reach. The journalists' work patterns variable was measured by work speed, work flexibility, audience interaction, and digital skills. Social media was defined as a digital communication platform that enables users to interact and share information broadly (Nasrullah, 2015). Journalists' work patterns encompass all journalistic activities from information collection and processing to dissemination to the public (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2001).

Data were collected using an online questionnaire distributed via Google Form, supported by literature review. A five-point Likert scale was used: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). Validity was tested using Pearson Product Moment correlation, and reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha with SPSS version 27. Items were considered valid if the significance value was < 0.05 , and the instrument was considered reliable if Cronbach's Alpha > 0.60 . Data analysis was performed using descriptive statistics and simple linear regression. Descriptive statistics described the characteristics of the respondents, while simple linear regression was used to determine the influence of social media on journalists' work patterns. Hypothesis testing was conducted using a t-test (partial) at a 5% significance level. The alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted if the significance value was < 0.05 , indicating a significant effect of social media on journalists' work patterns.

RESULTS

Validity Test

Based on the validity test results for the variable measuring the influence of social media on journalists' work patterns, almost all questionnaire items were declared valid, with significance values below 0.05. This indicates that the items accurately and consistently measure the variables being studied.

Table 1. Validity Test Results

Indicator	r-count	Sig.	Description
P1	0.394	0.031	Valid
P2	0.673	0.000	Valid
P3	0.339	0.031	Valid
P4	0.825	0.000	Valid
P5	0.499	0.005	Valid
P6	0.814	0.000	Valid
P7	0.417	0.022	Valid
P8	0.824	0.000	Valid
P9	0.449	0.013	Valid
P10	0.792	0.000	Valid

Source: Processed SPSS Statistics 27

Reliability Test

The reliability test showed a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.819, which falls into the very high category (>0.80). Therefore, the research instrument is reliable and suitable for data collection. With 10 items, the results indicate that all items are interrelated and effectively measure the variable of social media's influence on journalists' work patterns.

Table 2. Reliability Test Results

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items	Number of Respondents
0.819	10	30

Source: SPSS Statistics 27 processed data

Simple Linear Regression

The regression equation obtained is:

$$Y = 11.245 + 0.734X$$

The constant of 11.245 indicates that if social media usage is zero, the journalists' work pattern score is 11.245. The regression coefficient of 0.734 indicates that an increase of one unit in social media usage increases journalists' work pattern by 0.734 units. This shows a positive and significant influence of social media on journalists' work patterns.

Table 3. Simple Linear Regression Results

Variable	Coefficient	t-count	Sig.	Description
Constant (a)	11.245	3.214	0.003	Significant
Social Media (X)	0.734	5.492	0.000	Significant

Table 4. t-Test Results

Variable	t-count	Sig.	t-table	Description
Social Media (X)	5.492	0.000	2.086	Significant

Since t-count (5.492) > t-table (2.086) and $p = 0.000 < 0.05$, the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Social media has a positive and significant effect on journalists' work patterns.

Coefficient of Determination

The R^2 value is 0.518, indicating that 51.8% of the variance in journalists' work patterns is explained by social media, while 48.2% is influenced by other factors not included in this study.

Table 4. Coefficient of Determination

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error
1	0.720	0.518	0.501	2.134

Source: SPSS Statistics 27 processed data

DISCUSSION

Based on the results of this study, social media has a positive and significant influence on journalists' work patterns in the digital era. This is evidenced by the simple linear regression analysis, which shows a regression coefficient of 0.734 with a positive relationship. The t-test results indicate a significance value of 0.000, less than 0.05, and a t-count of 5.492, higher than the t-table value of 2.086. These results confirm the acceptance of the research hypothesis, demonstrating a significant effect of social media on journalists' work patterns.

These findings can be explained using Hermida's (2022) Social Journalism Theory, which highlights how social media transforms journalistic practices from one-way communication into more interactive and participatory processes. In conventional journalism, journalists primarily collect, process, and disseminate information to the public. In the digital era, however, audiences also act as information producers through platforms such as Instagram, X (Twitter), Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube. Events often appear first through user-generated posts before being reported by mass media.

Consequently, journalists must adapt by using social media as an initial source for news coverage. Social media significantly contributes to faster information acquisition, enabling real-time reporting. It also increases interaction between journalists and audiences. Unlike conventional media, where communication is mostly one-way, social media allows audiences to comment, provide suggestions, and share additional information on published news. This aligns with Social Journalism Theory, which emphasizes active public participation in information production and dissemination.

The study also reveals increased flexibility in journalists' work patterns. Reporters no longer need to remain in a newsroom; they can conduct reporting, communication with sources, and news distribution from various locations. This flexibility improves efficiency and access to information. However, it also demands higher professionalism, as journalists must maintain news quality and accuracy despite a more flexible working environment.

While social media facilitates information access and reporting speed, it also presents challenges. The rapid dissemination characteristic of social media creates pressure to publish news quickly, which can compromise information verification. Journalists face a dilemma between speed and accuracy, requiring them to uphold journalistic principles such as verification, objectivity, and social responsibility. Overall, these findings support the theories used in this study: Social Journalism explains interactive journalist-audience relationships; Media Convergence Theory highlights the need for multiskill adaptation; and Information Disorder Theory accounts for the challenges of misinformation and disinformation. Therefore, social media is a key factor driving the transformation of modern journalistic practices.

CONCLUSION

Based on the theoretical framework and research findings, social media plays a crucial role in modern journalistic practice. It functions not only as a communication and information dissemination tool but also as a primary source for initial news reporting. The characteristics of social media, including interactivity, rapid information dissemination, user participation, and ease of access, have driven changes in journalists' work patterns. Digital technology enables journalists to produce news faster, more flexibly, and in real-time. They are required to possess diverse digital skills, adapt to technological advancements, and maintain accuracy and quality in reporting.

Hermida's Social Journalism Theory highlights social media as an integral component of modern journalism, fostering a more participatory and interactive relationship between journalists and audiences. Consequently, social media significantly influences journalists' work patterns, making their roles more dynamic, collaborative, and aligned with the demands of the digital era.

LIMITATION

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results. First, the research sample consists solely of 30 journalism students from a single department, which limits the generalizability of the findings to professional journalists or other populations. Second, data were collected through self-reported questionnaires, which may introduce response bias, as participants might overestimate or underestimate their engagement with social media or their work patterns. Third, the study focuses only on quantitative analysis, using simple linear regression, which limits the depth of understanding regarding how social media shapes journalistic behavior in practical, real-world settings. Finally, other external factors, such as organizational policies, access to technological resources, or varying levels of digital literacy, were not controlled in this study, which may influence the observed effects. Future research should include larger, more diverse samples, incorporate qualitative methods, and consider additional variables to provide a more comprehensive understanding of social media's impact on journalism.

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