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Id. No: PAMB 2018
Class: II Ph. D.

Date: 16-03-2024
Time: 9.30 AM
Venue: Dr. R. Dwarakinath Hall

Seminar-I
on
Digital Journalism: An Overview

Synopsis

A strong instrument for influencing public opinion, promoting social change and upholding democratic principles is “Journalism”. The rapid and worldwide flow of information, the development of the internet and social media as major channels for communication made this era to be known as Information Age. Journalism in the digital era is marked by profound shifts in how news is reported, distributed and consumed.

Digital Journalism’s importance stems from its capacity to provide real-time reporting, which enables information to be made unprecedentedly quickly and effectively available to a global audience. News Stories can reach a wider audience attributable to digital platforms that make reading more interactive and engaging. Additionally, digital journalism lowers conventional entrance barriers, making a wider variety of voices and viewpoints heard. It offers an opportunity to enhance stories by adding multimedia components like audio, video and interactive graphics, which make complicated subjects more approachable and interesting. With this brief background, the seminar has been conceptualized with the following objectives:

1. To know the concept of Digital Journalism
2. To understand the tools and role of Digital Journalism in agriculture
3. To review the related research studies

Digital Journalism

Digital Journalism is defined as gathering, evaluating, creating and distributing news and information via digital platforms and electronic media. This form of journalism leverages the Internet, social media, mobile apps and other digital technologies to publish content accessible to a global audience.

News Gathering Tools and Formats of Digital Journalism

Social Media, e-mails, Search engines, Websites and Portals are the predominant news gathering tools. Listicles, Newsletters, Podcasts, Blogs, Videos, e-newspapers and e-magazines are the prime formats of Digital Journalism.

Role of Digital Journalism in Agriculture

Digital Journalism plays a crucial role in dissemination of agricultural news, community engagement, innovation & technology adoption, policy advocacy & awareness, crisis communication & management, education & training, weather & climate information,

market access & price information, international & cross-border information sharing and research & development.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Digital Journalism

Key advantages of Digital Journalism are accessibility & reach, speed & timeliness, interactivity & engagement, cost-effectiveness and data & analytics. Some of the major disadvantages are information overload, quality & depth and erosion of trust whereas, challenges associated with digital platforms usage are privacy & security, misinformation & fake news, digital divide and addiction & overuse new media.

Review of Research Studies

Dishant (2020) reported that 91.93 per cent of the KVK scientists used WhatsApp for transfer of technology, 84.47 per cent of them used YouTube for acquiring skills pertaining to agricultural practices and 76.40 per cent used Facebook for seeking and dissemination of agricultural information. Providing better internet connectivity in rural areas (Rank I), scientists should stay up to date regarding social media features and privacy settings (Rank II) and set up authentication body to scrutinize the messages regarding agriculture shared via social media (Rank III) were the major suggestions given by them.

Svenja and Julia (2023) inferred that 59 per cent of the statements were pro followed by contra (23.40 %) and neutral (17.60 %) with respect to agriculture articles selected for the study. Majority of pro statements used regarding advantages of digitalization of agriculture were work facilitation (10.20 %), reduced use of fertilizers and plant protection (8.90 %) and more environmental protection and sustainability (8.30 %). Statements like insufficient network coverage (3.70 %), great power of providers (2.90 %) and digitalization transforms agriculture (7.90 %) were contra and neutral statements, respectively.

Conclusion

Digital journalism stands as a transformative force in the dissemination of news and information, adapting to and driving changes in the way society communicates and engages with the world. It increases the reach and influence of journalism by utilizing the power of the internet and digital technologies to provide real-time, interactive and multimedia-rich information. Despite facing challenges, many forms of journalism are used by innumerable organizations in order to address problems faced by the farming community and to provide solutions. Exploration and evolution of digital journalism is a testament to the adaptability and resilience in the field of agriculture. The principles of journalism in this "Information era" relay on accuracy, fairness and accountability. It plays a crucial role in creating an informed, involved and connected global community. Thus, Digital journalism is more important than ever in today's world of rapid change because of its ability to innovate, adapt and uphold the integrity of the journalistic purpose.

References

- DISHANT, J. J., 2020, Social media for agricultural development: Perception of Krishi Vigyan Kendra scientists. *Ph.D. Thesis (Unpub.)*, Univ. Agril. Sci., Bangalore.
- SVENJA, M. AND JULIA, H., 2023, Media coverage of digitalization in agriculture - An analysis of media content. *Technological Forecasting & Social Change.*, 187:1-9.