



## Journalism and Social Media: A study of usage of Facebook by Journalists in Kashmir

### KEYWORDS

Social media, social networking, journalist, news, information.

**Rounaq Zahoor**

Research Scholar, Media Education Research Centre, University of Kashmir.

**Dr. Aaliya Ahmed**

Sr. Asst. Prof, Media Education Research Centre, University of Kashmir.

**Dr. Malik Zahra Khalid**

Sr. Asst. Prof, Media Education Research Centre, University of Kashmir.

**ABSTRACT** *Today's technology is changing so swiftly that many industries, including businesses and news media, can barely keep up with the revolution. In the traditional world, newspapers, corporations, governments, or other types of leading organizations simply had to give out information, Journalists have adapted quickly to the emerging new media paradigm. Social media is altering the face of journalism. And apparently more overpowering and influential than when print was overtaken by radio and television, Journalists need to evolve with social media in order to retain their eminence as the go-to news source. Yet, as with most things, this adaptation and usage didn't happen overnight. Social media has forced its way into journalism and has become a news source not only for the general public, but for journalists as well.*

### Introduction:

Social networking is emerging as a new and popular trend in the world of communications. It has made socialization simple. Facebook is one of the most widely used Social networking sites used by people from different walks of life in around the world and in Kashmir as well. Like many other professionals, journalists in Kashmir have also started using facebook. With the growing popularity of Facebook, journalists have begun to use these sites as alternative platforms for news delivery and dissemination.

An obvious reason for journalists doing so is the broad audience social networking sites have.

A recent report shows that Facebook accounts for 3.52% of total traffic to news media websites, only behind Google (17.32%), Yahoo (7.98%), and MSN (4.43%). The fact that Facebook is now a major referral site directing traffic to news and media sites suggests that some social network site users follow hyperlinks on social network sites to news sites. In fact, some of the links are provided by news media sites because a growing number of news organizations, including newspapers, have begun maintaining their own presence on social networks sites. Journalists maintain their presence on social network sites for a variety of reasons, such as delivering headlines of news stories, promoting events, and collecting user generated content.(Treadaway)

The new study, conducted by Pew Research Center in association with the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, finds that clear majorities of Twitter (63%) and Facebook users (63%) now say each platform serves as a source for news about events and issues outside the realm of friends and family. That share has increased substantially from 2013, when about half of users (52% of Twitter users, 47% of Facebook users) said they got news from the social platforms. Since Facebook is easy to use journalists find it to be an easy mode of communication. The aim of current study is to find how the advent of facebook as a journalistic tool has had an impact on the professional print journalists in Kashmir by examining how often they use facebook to gather and share news through this social network.

### Objectives:

1. To ascertain the reasons Kashmiri journalists have switched to facebook to disseminate news.
2. To examine the genre of news posts.

3. To find if the emergence of facebook has made news gathering/news reporting easier for Kashmiri journalists.

### Literature review:

Journalists benefit from SNSs since they provide rich sources of naturalistic behavioral data (Golder, Wilkinson & Huberman, 2007). Lori Schwab, Executive Director of the Online News Association (as cited in Wilson, 2008) articulates that facebook is used by journalist for themselves as well as in their profession and has become a central fact of their online life. A study by Raymond and Lu (2011) on "Reporting on the Reporters: Facebook and Journalists" found that Journalists use facebook not only for typical social networking reasons but also for purposes that are beneficial to their work. Many journalists use facebook and other SNSs to assist them in their story research and investigation, finding story ideas, staying in touch with family and finding out information about others. The study of Chandha (NA) on "Social networking sites and social ties: do they help forge new ties or simply revive old ones?" found that social media especially facebook has helped media professionals to get leads on stories, interact with people who were probably at the place where news event was taking place and get information. Arrival of facebook has brought some interesting trends to Indian journalists as it helped them with the stories and leads during breaking news events. Facebook is being used by scholars and journalists in gathering information for news stories as it is a much faster approach than traditional media (Jarad, 2009). For some journalist facebook is an effective tool of communication as it helps them to keep in touch with what concerns the public in a particular community and all over the world (Al Ezzi, El-Sheikh, Hamdy, Kamal, & Mahfouz, 2008). According to the research, journalists are adapting the new tools, but they do it carefully. Almost half the journalists responding to the survey expressed concerns about a lack of fact-checking or reporting-standards.

### Methodology:

This section consists of research model, data collection tool and population.

*Research model:* The researcher relied upon the survey method for the collection of data.

*Data collection tool:* To perceive the reasons Kashmiri print journalist drive to facebook, an online questionnaire was administered. The questionnaire consists of two sections. The first section establishes the personal details of participants and

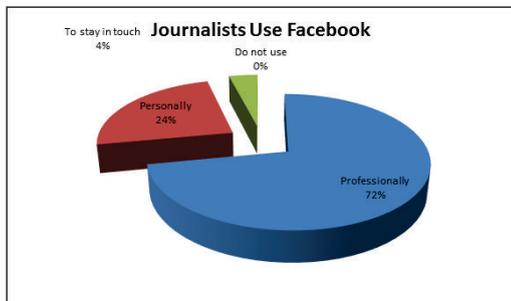
the second section includes questions aimed at determining the reasons journalists use facebook in their day to day activities.

**Sample:** Online questionnaire was distributed randomly among fifty Print journalist of Kashmir. Most of them are working with national and local dailies.

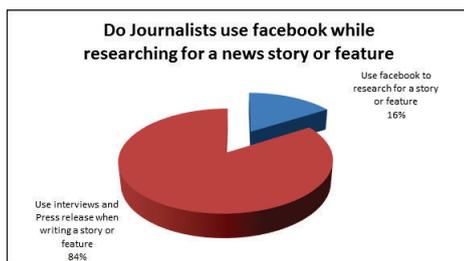
### Results:

The analysis of the questionnaires administered online among 50 journalists showed the following results

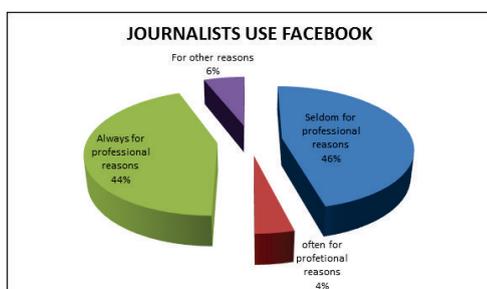
1. Of the 50 journalists 34 use Facebook professionally, 2 use Facebook to stay in touch with friends and relatives and 14 use Facebook personally



2. 44 journalists have started using facebook 3 years back, 1 journalist has been using it since last 2 years and 4 journalists have been using it since last 1 year.
3. All the 50 journalists share news through Facebook. All of them share the news that they find interesting
4. 43 journalists considered Facebook as good source of News while the remaining 7 didn't consider it as a good source of News
5. Of the 50 journalists only 8 use Facebook as a first sources when researching a news and feature story, others prefer to interview people or put their hands on a press release.



6. 23 journalists seldom join facebook groups or Like a page for professional reasons, 22 always do it for professional reasons and 2 said that they most often do it for professional reasons. Remaining had other reasons to join any group or like a page on Facebook.



7. All the journalists had an opinion that Facebook has an impact on their profession. Some of the responses to the question how Facebook has had an impact on their profession:

- “It helps me sometimes in real time to know what has

happened for example if protest has erupted or some gunfight has erupted people do write about it.”

- “Facebook has helped journalist to connect well with the situation, to understand a general mood of things without fear of anything, to know in real time what is happening.”
- “We can see almost all of the news organizations have their facebook pages, I think that speaks all. There are portals which first update news on their facebook pages then on their respective portals. Facebook has brought a complete change in the mind set of people and producers of news as well.”

### Conclusion:

*Most of the print journalists in Kashmir use Facebook for professional reasons (sharing and collecting information) But do not rely completely on it.*

Almost all the journalists maintain their presence on Facebook. The current study has brought us to the conclusion that most of the journalists are using Facebook to deliver news, suggesting that news dissemination through facebook has become a common practice. Although, they don't share every other information through facebook but most of them share news that they find interesting. The links they share on facebook are not necessarily of the websites of the organizations they work with. Although, Journalists consider Facebook as an important news source but they don't completely rely on it. They prefer interviews and press releases to form the content of news for the newspaper organization they work with.

A majority of Kashmiri journalists join facebook groups that are of some help in their professional lives. They even like the pages for professional reasons. These groups and pages on facebook provide them a variety of information. Not only breaking news or news in real time, but some groups and pages exclusively for journalists also provide them daily tips, keeping them updated with the latest trends in journalism. Kashmiri print journalists believe that facebook has an impact on their profession in a way that debates and discussions on almost all the latest events are abuzz on facebook giving good and unique story ideas at times. Facebook also helps in building good news sources. The little but timely information that facebook provides makes journalists to act and build a story in time. Facebook not only helps in collecting information but also to deliver it. What is important is not only the gathering and disseminating news through facebook but the pace at which it is collected and delivered. Through facebook print journalists come to know of events as they happen and deliver then at the same speed.

### References:

1. Al Ezzi, Mustafa., El-Sheikh, Marwan Hussein., Hamdy, Dalia Mohamed., Kamal Eldin, Mahitab., & Mahfouz, Sherine Ahmed. (2008). Cyber activism in Egypt through Facebook. Retrieved November 12, 2010 from [http://isaleh.uct.ac.za/Assets/PDFs/Cyber\\_Activism\\_in\\_Egypt\\_through\\_Facebook.pdf](http://isaleh.uct.ac.za/Assets/PDFs/Cyber_Activism_in_Egypt_through_Facebook.pdf).
2. Barthel, Michael, Shearer, E. Gottfried, j. and Mitchell, Amy The Evolving Role of News on Twitter and Facebook. Retrieved from <http://www.journalism.org/2015/07/14/the-evolving-role-of-news-on-twitter-and-facebook/>
3. Chandha, Monica. (NA). Social networking sites and social ties: do they help forge new ties or simply revive old ones? Retrieved November 6, 2010 from [http://www.edb.utexas.edu/edc385g\\_mchadha/links/social%20networking%20paper/Social%20paper/Social%20paper.pdf](http://www.edb.utexas.edu/edc385g_mchadha/links/social%20networking%20paper/Social%20paper/Social%20paper.pdf)
4. Golder, S. A., Wilkinson, D., & Huberman, B. A. (2007, June). Rhythms of social interaction: Messaging within a massive online network. In C. Steinfield, B. Pentland, M. Ackerman, & N. Contractor (Eds.), Communities and Technologies 2007: Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Communities and Technologies (pp. 41–66). London: Springer. Retrieved April 20, 2011 from [http://www.springerlink.com/content/w531741805016688/Jarad, Lina. \(2007\). Palestinian Facebook Groups: Their Uses and Gratifications \(Master's thesis, \(Master's thesis, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio\). Retrieved April 7, 2011 from http://etd.ohiolink.edu/view.cgi?acc\\_num=miami1250109519](http://www.springerlink.com/content/w531741805016688/Jarad, Lina. (2007). Palestinian Facebook Groups: Their Uses and Gratifications (Master's thesis, (Master's thesis, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio). Retrieved April 7, 2011 from http://etd.ohiolink.edu/view.cgi?acc_num=miami1250109519)
5. Raymond, Ronald K. & Lu, Yixin. (2011). Reporting on the Reporters: Facebook and Journalists. Innovation Journalism ,8(2). Retrieved July 20, 2011 from [www.innovationjournalism.org](http://www.innovationjournalism.org)
6. Treadaway, “Why Newspapers Need to Heed Facebook, Now”; Lewis, “10 Ways Newspapers are Using Social Media to Save the Industry”; Martire, “Engaging Users: User-Generated Content and Tools for Newspapers.”
7. Wilson, Kelly. (2008, February-March). In your Facebook. American Journalism Review 30(1), 12-13. Retrieved December 12, 2010 from <http://ajr.org/articles.asp?id=44465>