Exploration of Consensus Construction in News Practice in the Social Media Era

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Abstract: *The construction of news consensus is based on three pillars: practical foundation, ideological preparation, and goal orientation. For news practice, its formation plays a key role in promoting the daily operation and standardization of news work. This article deeply analyzes the phenomenon of news consensus in news practice, explores the root causes of consensus deficiency, and discusses the function of social dialogue in news practice. The article further starts from two aspects: the construction of conceptual consensus and the construction of innovative models, clarifying effective ways to enhance news consensus in news practice, aiming to provide reference and inspiration for future news practice.*

Keywords: Social media era; News practice; News Consensus.

1. Introduction

With the advent of the digital age, social media, as an emerging means of communication, has profoundly changed people's daily lives, information dissemination, and even social structure. Social media platforms such as Facebook TikTok、WeChat and Weibo not only connect people, but also reshape the pattern of information flow. In this context, the issue of consensus construction in news practice has become particularly important. This article aims to explore the current situation, challenges, and development paths of consensus construction in news practice in the era of social media by reviewing relevant literature. In the Internet era, people only care about the topics they are interested in, forming different circles. This leads to the collapse of grand narratives and a decrease in media cohesion. However, as an open and mobile public space, social media can cultivate diverse consensus. For example, Weibo covers both text and video, allowing users to express themselves freely and enabling cross circle dissemination and interaction. The events on social media are a "event system" formed by the joint participation and discussion of the government, institutions, media, enterprises, and the public. Compared with the "event straight line" of traditional media, it can better reflect the social development direction of public participation and diverse values. For example, the events selected by Weibo Night not only cover multiple fields, but also reflect the integration of mainstream values and subcultures.

Consensus refers to the same or similar views and emotions formed by different individuals or groups on the same issue. In the process of social interaction, the formation of consensus is influenced by various external environmental factors. When the audience is exposed to news events, they are easily influenced by public opinion and form passive emotional reactions. The rise of the Internet has further broadened the community boundary of consensus and endowed it with virtual characteristics. There are multidimensional perspectives and different interpretations in various fields regarding the interpretation of "news consensus". The key is to understand how news consensus is specifically achieved in different contexts. From the perspective of news communication, some scholars view news consensus as the consensus reached by members of society through daily interactions, psychological communication, public opinion dissemination, theoretical education, and other means in emotional, moral, value evaluation, ideal beliefs, and theoretical viewpoints in their daily lives and practices. Most consensus studies adopt the theory of meaning construction and return to an individual perspective. Some scholars believe that consensus is achieved by recognizing and respecting individual differences, and seeking common ground. Scholars further elaborate that semantic construction is a diffusion process that can trigger public emotional resonance, promote exchange and integration of viewpoints, and form a broader consensus. Subsequent research

focuses on individual media exposure behavior and explores the public influence of media in consensus formation. Other scholars have combined specific news events to analyze the reporting behavior of news media on public affairs, revealing how media can use social forces to build consensus, which constitutes a unique interpretation of media discourse.

2.   Challenges Faced by Current News Practice

News practice involves the two core subjects of media and the public, as well as their multidimensional connections with the subjective, objective, and social world. News practice needs to ensure three major effectiveness: authenticity, legitimacy, and sincerity. The news practice discussed in this article is a broad category that not only covers the final presentation of news reports, but also involves the behavior patterns of media when reporting specific phenomena or events, the level of public participation, and the diverse interactions between the two.

2.1 Complexity of Media Environment: Worsening Crisis of Trust

In the Internet era, news production has shifted from a closed organizational model to an open and socialized model. Audiences have not only increased their participation, but also increased their understanding of news practice. On the one hand, audiences have more opportunities to delve into news practice and accumulate professional knowledge; On the other hand, "decentralization" leads to the decentralization of news production power, and the coexistence of multiple entities reduces the credibility and professionalism of news, posing a crisis of trust for professional media. The research report points out that through measures such as strengthening the qualification management of news release terminals and consolidating media responsibilities, professional media have initially established an orderly and closed-loop news product system. Meanwhile, self media and platform media have become the focus of network communication management.

"Dormancy effect" points out that time will affect the credibility of information sources, which is still significant in the Internet era. On the one hand, there are numerous and complex sources of information, making it difficult for the audience to accurately determine the authenticity of the information; On the other hand, over time, the audience may forget the source of information and unify it as a "news media", leading to unprofessional news production being mistakenly attributed to professional media and exacerbating the crisis of trust. The accumulation of long-term media chaos has deepened the public's negative impression of the media, and the media chaos and public distrust of the media have hindered effective communication between both parties.

2.2 Weakening of Function: Social Needs are Becoming Increasingly Diverse

News media usually have functions such as information transmission, public opinion guidance, supervision, and knowledge dissemination. However, in practice, its functions are more diverse and complex, and it needs to meet the needs of the audience. On the one hand, the audience's demand has raised their expectations for news functionality. Modern communication technology has changed the audience's perception of time and space, placing higher demands on the speed, content, and form of information transmission. At the same time, the emotional needs of the audience are becoming increasingly important, especially when public emotions are involved in news events, the social function that the media needs to undertake cannot be ignored.
On the other hand, the space for news practice is limited and controlled. Bourdieu's theory of "news field" reveals that news practice is influenced by both politics and economy. In major events, journalists need to follow professional standards and discipline.

2.3 Diversification of Subjects: Diversification of Media Criticism Standards

Scholars define media criticism as the value evaluation and analysis of media based on specific social and class relationships and concepts, using critical criteria. In the Internet era, technology empowerment has made the public's voice unprecedented. In the field of news, this is reflected in the increase in audience engagement and public criticism of news works, practices, and workers. The subject of media criticism has expanded from experts and scholars to diverse subjects such as the general public. Under the influence of online culture, critical standards are in a state of detachment. Multiple subjects have different value standards, breaking the rational foundation of professional criticism and exhibiting emotional and personalized characteristics. The diversification of critical subjects enriches critical discourse, but also brings about the opposition of value standards, exacerbating the lack of "news consensus" in news practice.

3. The Significance of Social Discussion in News Practice

In an ideal language environment, rationality is reflected through everyone's right to speak and mutual respect. No matter how times or contexts change, free social discussion always plays a positive role. The public's attention and discussion on news practice is not only a reflection of public opinion supervision, but also a communication of public will. Although free social discussion may lead to emotional polarization and a lack of professional knowledge and literacy, it helps to maximize the formation of news consensus and enhance social cohesion.

3.1 Diversified Subjects Promote the Deepening of News Consensus

The media itself, research experts, and the public collectively constitute the diverse subject of media criticism. Media self-criticism is the process by which journalists reflect and summarize their experience and knowledge; The media criticism of experts and scholars conducts theoretical criticism and exploration of laws in news practice through observation and participation; The media criticism from the public reflects the feedback on the effectiveness of the news and the public's will. Media criticism provides a space for dialogue among various sectors of society, covering different discourse roles. The Internet provides a public opinion platform for interactive dialogue among multiple subjects. It can not only deepen the consensus of news, but also promote the socialized production and popularization of news knowledge.

3.2 Audience supervision ensures standardized implementation

One of the functions of media criticism is that the subject of criticism communicates with the criticized through critical discourse, supervises the practical activities of news media, and promotes them to better serve the public and society. The public's public opinion supervision and feedback on the process of news production and the effectiveness of works directly affect the practice of journalists. In addition, public opinion and criticism, as a social existence, pose potential public opinion pressure on journalists, prompting news practices to conform to public expectations and professional standards. The news industry is not completely passive. By engaging in social discussions with the public and engaging in dialogue and negotiation with various sectors, it establishes professional, ethical, and value norms, thereby gaining a legitimate foundation for existence and public trust.

Through these two levels of social discussion, the relationship between the media and the public has shifted from a single subject object relationship to an intersubjective relationship. Both parties have reached a consensus on mutual respect and non coercion, actively and effectively practicing behavior, thus achieving the reconstruction of news consensus in news practice.

4. Exploration of Strategies for Enhancing News Consensus in News Practice

4.1 Dialogue as the foundation, jointly building the foundation of news concepts

Dialogue plays a central role in interpersonal communication, emphasizing the achievement of consensus through dialogue based on sincerity, authenticity, and mutual understanding. Social discussion, as an important form of social interaction, requires the public and the news industry to uphold the "rationality" of communication, to understand and dissolve opposition, to bridge divisions through consensus, and to continuously enhance news consensus in news practice.

The social discussion between the public and the news industry should strive to achieve three major results: firstly, deepening mutual understanding through communication actions, allowing the public to acquire more practical knowledge of news, and the news industry to have a more comprehensive understanding of the public and their needs; Secondly, building positive dynamic interactive relationships, where public opinion expression becomes the driving force for improving news practices, and the practices of the news industry better serve the public; Finally, strengthen the news consensus in news practice, covering multiple dimensions such as news supply and demand consensus, news subject responsibility consensus, and news practice ethics consensus.

4.2 Transforming Daily News into an Outline and Reshaping the Form of News Models

The problems in the social discussions between the public and the news industry are partly due to the shortcomings of the current social discussion mechanism. Social discussions are often triggered by controversial news reports, leading to public questioning and dissatisfaction with news practices. News organizations respond or handle this

officially, and journalists also express their personal opinions. However, this mechanism has three major problems: discussion lags behind practice, leading to emotional expression among the public, passive response from the industry, and opposing positions; Negative discussions are difficult to achieve positive results, and the news industry often responds to audience supervision with official announcements, even resorting to cold treatment; The public and journalists lack effective communication and dialogue channels, and journalists often participate in discussions on personal social media, making it difficult for both sides' voices to reach each other.

Faced with these issues, news media can try to change their perspective, communicate with the audience as readers, establish a "public editor" position, and integrate news practice discussions into daily life. On the one hand, the involvement of professional journalists helps to standardize the process of news practice; On the other hand, audience participation in dialogue can fully leverage the role of media as a communication bridge, promoting the normalization and normalization of social discussions.

4.3 Ritual as a medium, building the soul of a "social community"

Media ritual is a transcendence and sublimation of the ritualized characteristics of human beings. It retains the non daily and symbolic features of ritualism, while "historically reproducing" major events. The ritualization of media is particularly prominent in reporting on major festivals and catastrophic events, achieving the sharing of symbols and meanings through ritualization, helping people form a unified cognition and specific beliefs, which are widely accepted by the audience and reshape people's understanding of the world. In the era of the Internet, media ritualization breaks the boundaries of time and space, and its influence extends to the whole country and even the world through the Internet. The ritualization of media endows communication with sacredness, constructs a myth of "social center", and enables media communication behavior to exert a more profound and extensive influence in integrating social consciousness.

A democratic society should provide a free and open environment where the public can speak freely and express their opinions. News practice should implement this concept and provide solutions to problems in dialogue. From this perspective, news practice utilizes a series of ritualistic behaviors to integrate the public and private domains and propose reasonable solutions. In the news practice of major events, constructive ritualistic symbols have opened up new possibilities for news media to reconstruct news practice, promoting the deepening and consolidation of news consensus.

5. Conclusion

In the field of news practice, emphasizing the purpose of news consensus is not to restrict the expression of individual free will, but to enhance mutual understanding and tolerance. Although the current news practice in society still faces many challenges and shortcomings, we can still put forward effective requirements and expectations for the behavioral performance of different subjects. This not only helps to promote the improvement of public self-awareness and the overall progress of society, but also is an important way to achieve news consensus in the field of news practice.
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