

EDITORIAL

Digital Media and the Academic World

The entry of digital electronics in life and economy, which is often called the digital revolution, or third industrial revolution began in the latter half of twentieth century. During this period, the transformation from traditional methods of communication shifted to digital computing with advanced communication technologies. The leading global companies such as Alphabet, Amazon, Apple, Microsoft, Facebook are based on digital platforms and they have captured the personal and professional spaces of individual users.

The research on digital societies developed as an important sub-discipline of sociology that focuses on understanding the use of digital media as part of society and how it is affecting the life of humans and their environment. Digital media research also grew as an academic interest over digitalization of newsrooms, advertising, public relations, and news consumption. The research in digital media or digital communication can be largely divided into – new media studies, digital culture, digital marketing and trends and digital behaviour (audience studies). The epistemological and ontological understanding of the role of the traditional media and its impact on its audience and society has inspired the digital media studies.

The entry of spaces with user generated, or orientated content has become an important turn in media and communication research. The growth of digital technology and end user enabled media spaces like social media, social knowledge websites started the shift. The shift from senders of message to channel happened

during the previous decades where the focus was on medium over messages. Now, digital media research focuses more on its users (receiver). The user is a liberated audience who is no more a passive viewer or listener. They can respond, react, create, distribute the content which often challenges the established mainstream media. The concept of citizen or user journalism or content is now more of gate watching, which questions the theories of gatekeeping and agenda setting.

The academic interest in digital media lies in areas like use of social media spaces for news creating and distribution, misinformation and fake news, digital literacy, digital reach and penetration, news making and policies. The market research on digital media always fascinated researchers to understand the trends of business. From using digital spaces to run business to running business on digital spaces – opened a huge opportunity for media and communication researchers in industry. The ongoing pandemic made most of the lives stuck at which led to Work from Home (WFH), and now it is moving towards Everything from Home (EFH) – which is again a challenge for digital media researchers in coming days. But all these scenarios also present an opportunity for media scholars world over to study various aspects digital media and add new knowledge to Digital Media Research.

Dr. Manish Verma

Director and Professor,
Amity School of Communication,
Amity University Gurugram
