

# Impact of new media technology on international law



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To what extent can it be argued that new media technologies have impacted on the structure of international news?

The concept of globalization has changed the way or perhaps the structure of international news and represents a key component in the media transformation. It implies that the new media technologies plays an important role in enhancing globalization by allowing mass flowing of information between countries and intercultural societies. However, the rise of citizen journalism and internet seems to challenges the traditional way of international news structure.

First of all, globalization has made an impact on the editorial structure and content in international news structure. Globalization is best describes as a transformation process while the development of new media technologies like internet and satellite system is an important part it. Flew (2007) describes globalization as a process rather an outcome or a collective tendencies of economic, political, social and cultural relations across nation's border. Therefore globalization creates new forms of international journalism, the political ideas, economic events and communication spread much more easily and widely than before. The global news system is driven by technology and spread through the different media form such as international news broadcasts, televisions programming, internet and even satellite radio broadcasting. In fact, Kperogi (2011) points out that foreign news and local news continues to co-exist but become networked and blended together, creating new form of journalism. However audience are still basically primarily concern on their own national news while national interests are still the main aspects in journalism. Holm (2001) agreed that <https://assignbuster.com/impact-of-new-media-technology-on-international-law/>

the content in the international news structure was always about political and economic event in foreign countries. In that case, this foreign news is facing competitive pressures with the other sensualizes and entertainment news. However with the new media technologies such as satellite and cable system, more and more people are getting concerned about the issues happened around the globe. Foreign news is now known as global news; therefore new agencies have the need to expand news productions and developed a more professionalism practices in the news coverage. Reese (2010) argues that international news agencies have to position themselves within transnational relationships, while maintaining their norms and logics to engage with the local practices. CNN as an example, an US based satellite and cable channel, now has a specific column for international news coverage such as Africa, Asia, Europe and Middle East in the website. Therefore the selection of international news must not just reflect global interests but also address to the local community.

Likewise, globalization as a post-modern world phenomenon has eventually the shaped the role and practice of journalists to mediate the news between the nation and the global interest. As Volkmer (1999) argues that the globalization and journalism has reflected the new categories of media, practice, professionals, and content which they need to redefine into global perspective. Today's, every media people have the computer and internet access to international 24 hours news feed. The digitalization of information and the development of new media technologies with the capacity to store the information and permitting the convergence of information have contributed in spreading a global agenda. This evolution of news system has

been seen in some of the international news agencies in the past 19<sup>th</sup> century such as Reuters and AP which had become the emergence of today's modern global news system. Journalists and reporters are assigned throughout all over the world even the war zone like Palestine and Iraq with the objective to cover and report any significant live event happened in the country. The transformation in the structure of international news communication has created the perception of a shrinking world through intercultural connectivity. Thus people are getting more concern with the global news, especially when it has huge political, economic and social impact to the world. New media technologies allow the people to access to foreign news, while breaking news, live event and exclusivity have resulted changing demand in international news coverage. The reason is because people always wanted to be the first to know what is happening and it must be huge, example like the 911 incidents the people around the world are able connect to live news reporting but also in the same time they have also witnessed the second terrorist plan attack during the news reporting in the their TV screen as it is happening. International news reporting has expanded widely and can be received throughout the world. CNN, Al-Jazeera and even BBC do not just exist in their origin country; foreign operational offices also have been established across the world. Therefore, it could be argued that new media technologies and the Internet have stimulated this interconnectedness between countries and lead to the rapid spread of information, news, content and programming.

Furthermore as the media corporations expand globally, the structure and content in the international news become more and more saturated which

people have been bombarded by different kind of political reinscribed messages. Basically, media consists of propaganda potential to narrow down the range of ideas in the public sphere and restrict debate among the citizens. McComb & Shaw (1997) describes media has the powerful influence in determine the agenda and highlight certain issue in the society. With new media technologies, these effects certainly become global and visible especially throughout this cultural sensitivity world. To illustrates this, Israel-Palestinian and middle-east conflicts are now the international central agenda, by consistently highlighting and broadcasting on going live events such as the war in Israel and Palestine, the international media create a new form of public sphere and awareness. However as media grow in scale and centrality in international news reporting, the degree to which media constructs the agenda in news become an issue. Reese (2009) argues that the notion of globalization leads to another way to describe Americanization, cultural imperialism and transnational capitalism. One of the assumptions is that the international news agencies are very much controlled by the political elite group in the western countries. Neither do they are not covering enough news in the developing countries, the international news are still very much constructed in a very selective and biased way.

Furthermore, due to the commercialised and privatisation in the media, the competition among those media tycoons has been reduced to few with media corporations are largely concentrate on fewer owner. Therefore media today are moving across national borders and building alliances with local forms through conglomeration and integration. One of the very good examples perhaps would be News Corporation owned by Rupert Murdoch.

With the subsidiaries in Europe, United States of America, Asia and Australia,  
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Murdoch has successfully expanded his global media empire through the establishment of satellite TV systems (Flew, 2007). The international media system today is largely owned by Western Corporations, with not even single one is coming from developing countries. It would be wise to say that the current international news agenda is imbued with westernised ideology. For instances, the participation of the minority group such as the African American are very much underrepresented in the media while the hunger and poverty in South Africa seldom been highlighted in the international news agenda. It is perhaps these international agenda does not seem to create a political and economy interest to the westernised country. On the hand, the conflicts happened in the Islamic middle-east countries have been the central of the international news. This is because these people who own these technologies of satellite and cable system as well as the resources are basically the white magnates, who have the tied relationship with the ruling class members. Thus they have the direct power to control the content and agenda in international media. From the political economy perspective, new media technologies has been seen as propaganda tools by these political elite groups members to spread their ideology into international level. The international news agenda somehow has been pre-constructed by the representatives such as journalists, editors and political figures to protect the dominant westernised ideology.

Despite the media conglomeration impacted on the international news agenda, the rise of the new internet phenomenon, the citizen journalism, seems to challenge the traditional way of international news cover. In fact, Goode (2009) defines citizen journalism as a range of web-based practices

whereby ordinary user engages in journalistic practices. These practices include current affairs blogging, photo and video sharing and even posting eyewitness opinion on current events in social network. Indeed, new technologies has eventually changed the practices of journalism while new digital media such as Facebook, Twitter, DIGG and even The Huffington Post have connected the world and lower the distinctions between professional journalists and netizen. Likewise Dahlgren (2005) points out that the internet has the potential to democratize the current public sphere and lead to strengthened political interest and participation among the citizens in a long term effect. With computerized technology, satellite TV and the Internet have contributed to the cost-effective communication which it stimulates the home-made news production phenomenon among the citizens without the contents of being filtered by the gatekeeper. Citizens can often report breaking news more quickly than traditional news agencies. Social media like Twitter and Facebook enable a powerful form of citizen journalism with live coverage of events such as the war in Israel and Gaza as it is happening. It is perhaps citizen journalism has been act as form of pre-alert form of news. As Reese et. al. (2007) argues that blogging and other social media have helped create an interlocking dialog between professionals and citizens. In fact, rather than competing against each other, professional media seems to take citizen journalism into account and are responsible to embrace their efforts. CNN with new media technologies allows the people around the world have to opportunity to contribute the unfiltered or uncensored video and text-based news report (Kperogi, 2011: 319). Furthermore this digitalised form of news allows rapidly retransmitted effect throughout the world while

commentaries were available in the social media platform (E. g. Youtube  
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video-sharing to Facebook). Such news and information sharing phenomenon eventually contribute to the development of meta-journalism, and offer diverse range of alternatives news sources in the internet. Therefore social media established a healthy form of public sphere where individual opinion can be heard and dialogue between the citizen and social institution could be formed.

In this sense, the international news agencies sometimes do rely on the information from the citizens, especially when they do not have direct access or footage to the news coverage of the event. Professional sometimes selects and edits user-generated content before it actually published online. Indeed new digital media beyond most of the media regulation and gatekeeper control enable to create democratic practices in international news structure. However the practices of citizen journalism still remains scrutiny. Goode (2009) argues that the online communities lack of professionalism and credibility in this participatory news production. Although internet enable new form of public sphere, by creating the opportunity to publicize criticisms and comments, and to engage in a continuous dialogue, the accuracy of the news still much be questioned. This is because everyone on the internet can write and post anything about any issues in the internet. Unlike the professional journalism, the news without gatekeeper can be written without based on any facts, while the photo footage we seen on the internet might not be true and have been reconstructed by any computer tools like Photoshop and Video editor.

Basically citizen journalism does not empower individual in any perspective. Again with the Israel-Gaza conflicts, the citizens in the country used twitter



to routinely update about the news with the Hashtag features available (e. g. #IsraelGaza), but it still would not change anything. Therefore the credibility and objectivity of citizen journalism somehow still need to examine.

In conclusion, international news structure has been deeply affected by the new media technologies in the process of globalization. Media, practice, professionals, and content have to restructure into global perspective. While majority of the international news agency are owned by Western Corporation, new media technologies are essential propagate to shape the ideological agenda into international level. The rise of citizen journalism on the other hand creates the opportunity for the public participation in news production which public opinion and dialogue between the citizen and social institution could be formed. Therefore, new media technologies to certain extent still plays a critical role in helping international news organization act as a watchdog to monitor issues around the world.

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