

Applying Quality Management Systems to Journalism: Possibilities and Guidelines¹

Josenildo Guerra

Abstract

This article reflects on the possibilities for developing a management and quality assessment system for news organizations. It assesses difficulties such as a lack of objective methods for measuring the characteristics of products and the absence of consensus about the desired values and requirements. It also underscores challenges such as building reliable methods to obtain consensus values and generating innovative products and processes resulting from the assessments undertaken. It defines a concept of quality and proposes two basic requirements: truth and relevance. The conclusion presents a preliminary proposal for a tripartite quality management system based on a) commitments and organizational structure, b) production processes, and c) products.

Keywords:

Journalism. Quality. Innovation

1 Introduction

The commitment to quality is a central part of the discourse of many organizations, journalistic or otherwise. According to Slack, Chambers and Johnston (2007, p. 549), “business newspapers and management magazines are dominated by articles about quality. It seems that we have experienced a ‘quality revolution.’” The reason for all this attention, according to the authors, is an increasing awareness that

[H]igh-quality goods and services can give an organization a significant competitive advantage. Good quality reduces the cost of rework, rejects and returns and, more importantly, good quality means satisfied customers. Some production managers believe that, in the long run, quality is the most important single factor that affects an organization’s performance in relation to its competition (SLACK; CHAMBERS; JOHNSTON, 2007, p. 549).

Quality is an organizational resource that links the spheres of the production of goods and services and their consumption. For producers, the effective consolidation of quality management and its implementation has competitive

advantages for the organization, which could put it in the lead in the segment in which it operates. The desired returns could be obtained by improving the organization's publicly projected image, and consequently the increased profits resulting from the status achieved.

In regard to the sphere of consumption, the indication of quality (through tools such as existing certification and the experience of the consumer or people in their social circle) is a guarantee that the product really does contain the features and functionality the customer wants. It offers security in regard to consumption, due to the "quality" label's credibility with consumers.

In the news business, organizations seek to signal their commitment to quality and society seeks to organize itself in its own way and in different forms to demand the highest quality from the products it receives.²

The problem is that the demand for quality or its opposite is not always or not usually accompanied by a solid means of measurement. A given item is a "quality product" because the seller says so, or it is "not a quality product"

because a critic says so. Thus, the discourse on quality or its absence in the context of news production ends up having two serious limitations: a) it is not always sufficiently demonstrated with measurement data obtained through clear and reliable methods, b) as a result, it is not always objectively recognized as valid by the other actors in that field.

These two constraints lead us to identify three challenges for the scientific community of journalism scholars, organizational managers, media professionals and society: a) developing clear and reliable methods for evaluating job performance and the quality of journalistic products, b) obtaining consensus on the parameters for best practices and values for the business, c) doing research that gives rise to both innovations and methods for assessing news production that can meet the increasing demand expected for (measured and verified) quality in journalistic products.

The inclusion of quality management studies and systems (widespread and successful in other business areas) in journalism can be a decisive factor for triggering scholarly, professional and

1 This paper contains preliminary results from two studies: 1) news production management, with support from the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq), the Brazilian research funding agency, and 2) IQJ - indicators for quality journalism produced in the context of the UNESCO/National Network of Press Observatories cooperation project no. 45-13103037BRZ (the opinions expressed herein are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect UNESCO's views on this subject). A preliminary version of this article, "Notes on the development of research quality assessment applied to journalism," was presented at the Journalism Theory GP, 9th Meeting of Groups/Centers for Communications Research, a component of the 32nd Brazilian Conference on Communications Science, held in 2009 in Curitiba, Paraná, Brazil.

2 For example, there are the Media Accountability Systems (MAS), as they are called by Claude-Jean Bertrand. MAS can be considered "any means of improving media services to the public, entirely independent of government.... They are a combination of quality control, customer service, continuing education and more – naturally not limited to self-regulation" (BERTRAND, 2002, p. 35).

civic awareness that will make us confront the abovementioned challenges.

2 Some experiences with quality assessment in journalism

The debate on quality in journalistic activity is just getting started when it comes to quality management, assessment and certification tools. Most of the few existing studies address the issue indirectly (PINTO; MARINHO, 2003, p. 4).³ Furthermore, we find more experiences of quality assessment than scientific-academic discussion of the subject, which suggests that what is happening in this particular area is similar to what is generally taking place in the field of journalism and communications: an “apartheid” between the spheres of technical production and scientific production.⁴ This is indeed constitutes a serious problem in the specific area of communications and journalism, resulting in almost non-existent research activity and product and process development, and thus a lack of innovation resulting from scientific studies.

Some international experiences have contributed to the development of models and parameters for assessing news organizations’ commitment to quality. In Brazil, the inclusion of methodologies aimed at measuring and

allocating objective assessment criteria has not yet produced tools that can be made publicly available for evaluation procedures.

One of the most advanced experiences we have in this country, if not the most advanced so far, is the News Agency for Children’s Rights (ANDI). Since 1996, ANDI has monitored coverage of children and adolescents in the Brazilian news media. By refining its methodology, that organization has developed a quantitative/qualitative ranking of the newspapers monitored by calculating a weighted average rate resulting in 18 items, which were given different weights according to the relevance of the topics evaluated (AGÊNCIA DE NOTÍCIAS DOS DIREITOS DA INFÂNCIA, 2005, pp. 8-16).

Two experiences from outside Brazil could suggest that some important trends are emerging. One is the Fundación Prensa y Democracia México (Fundación Prende). Based on extensive international search, an interpretation of the Mexican communications scene, and the categorical assertion that democracy requires high-quality information for better citizenship, it has drawn up a set of eight principles, namely: a) transparency in the construction and processing of information, b) checking and contextualization of information and data,

³ They have basically identified three areas of interest in the articles studies: a) quality as a characteristic of an organization and product; b) quality understood as a public service; c) quality viewed as a strategic investment.

⁴ Although it is a strong word, “apartheid” in this context is the lack of an established tradition of research applied to product development and practices in our area. Essentially theoretical and diagnostic studies predominate (analytical or descriptions of content and practices). For a more detailed analysis of this in the specific context of journalism, see Meditsch (1999).

c) journalistic investigation, d) opportunities for horizontal communication among journalists, editors and publishers, e) a code of ethics, f) mechanisms to counterbalance the media: the right to response, reader advocacy, ombudsmen and civil observatories, g) equal distribution of advertising budgets, and h) the right and access to information. The document describes three levels of consideration of these principles: an initial description of the item, followed by proposed guidelines, and finally, suggested practical indicators for assessing the results achieved.

Another experience has arisen from a partnership between the International Standardization & Accreditation Services (ISAS) and the Media & Society Foundation (MSF). The former is a private organization dedicated to certification and accreditation services whose mission is to assist private, public and government institutions that seek to establish and maintain quality standards in the public interest and to accredit certification bodies to verify their commitment to such standards. The second is a Swiss non-profit organization whose mission is encouraging the development of standards for communications organizations. Its assessment tool for the communications sector, specifically the news industry, has identified thirteen criteria: a) quality of information, b) quality of content, c) ethics, d) independence, e) relations with advertisers, f) relations with the public, g) relations with public officials, h) transparency, i) audience surveys, j) human resource management, k) work

organization, l) infrastructure, and m) relations with contractors and suppliers.

These examples point to a trend in quality assessment and management for news organizations. Inspired by these benchmarks, the aim of this paper is to systemize an initial draft for a quality management system applied to news organizations composed of three sets of requirements: a) organizational commitments and structure, b) production processes, and c) products. First, however, let us focus on an initial definition of quality.

3 Quality and performance for news organizations

In the business administration literature, quality can be defined on the basis of two aspects: adherence to previously defined standards (called specifications) by the organization itself (CHIAVENATO, 2007, pp. 374-375) and the “degree of fit between consumers’ expectations and their perception of the product or service” (BERRY, PARASURAMAN, in SLACK; CHAMBERS; JOHNSTON, 2007, pp. 552-553).⁵ The first aspect involves internal quality, and the second, external quality. “There is no doubt that, without internal quality, one cannot build and maintain an external image of quality” (CHIAVENATO, 2007, p. 375). The opposite is also true: an organization can never establish satisfactory internal standards without paying attention to external quality requirements.

According to the ABNT NBR ISO 9000:2005 standard, quality is the “degree to which a set of

inherent characteristics fulfills requirements,” with the requisite “need or expectation [for a product or service] that is usually expressed implicitly or explicitly.” Among these three definitions, I propose a synthesis of the concept of quality as a comparison of characteristics displayed by products and the requirements that are a) necessary for its operation, and b) expected by users. The closer the characteristics are to these requirements, the higher the quality.

But what are the quality requirements for products in journalism? Within the sphere of journalistic activity, the public has two basic requirements for news: truth and relevance. Truth, because it is expected to apprise the public of the facts.⁶ Relevance, because not all facts are newsworthy. Only those that meet the public’s needs are considered relevant.⁷

Here we come across the first difficulty when dealing with this topic: justifying such parameters as being quality standards and substantiating them scientifically. These steps are important because, when it comes to quality and quality assessment systems, a great deal of consensus is assumed. So much so that a basic premise for the discussion and development of such tools is broad

agreement among the different parties involved and interested in building benchmarks. In the case of the ABNT NBR ISO 9000 standard, for example:

Brazilian Standards, whose content is the responsibility of the Brazilian Committees (ABNT/CB), Sectorial Standardization Commissions (ABNT/NOS) and the Temporary Study of Special Commissions (ABNT/CEET), are prepared by Study Commissions (CE) formed by representatives of the sectors involved, including: producers, consumers and neutral parties (universities, laboratories and others).

The ABNT NBR ISO 9000 standard was developed within the Brazilian Committee for Quality (ABNT/CB-25) by the Study Commission for Fundamentals and Vocabulary (EC-25:001.01). The Draft was circulated for National Consultation in accordance with Special Edict dated 07.12.2000, Project Number ABNT NBR ISO 9000. The Amended Draft circulated for National Consultation in accordance with Edict no. 10 of 31.10.2005 (ASSOCIAÇÃO BRASILEIRA DE NORMAS TÉCNICAS, 2005, p. iv).

Strong consensus, it should be allowed, is not among the greatest virtues of the field of communications and journalism. Consequently, it is impossible to attempt to give a full account of the difficulty mentioned above. The justification of truth and relevance as parameters gives rise to an ethical/political debate which, although

5 This is a consolidated definition. The authors have sought to sum up and reconcile different views of quality: the transcendental approach, and those based on manufacturing, users, products and value (SLACK; CHAMBERS; JOHNSTON, 2007, pp. 550-551). Another type of proposed classification involves five approaches: transcendental, product-based, user-based, production-based and value-based (CARVALHO, 2005, pp. 8-9).

6 According to Gomes, “a fact...is a complex [entity] that includes events involving things, people and writings. Its characteristic hallmarks are activity, relationships and time.... A fact is the result, the consequence of an action, that which a production or operation leaves behind as its product and outcome” (GOMES, 2009, p. 30).

7 The statement that truth and relevance are parameters for quality is based on Guerra (2008).

very dear to Western democracies, especially since the seventeenth century, has encountered strong criticism, especially in the academic area of communications and journalism. Its scientific basis, in turn, is questioned even more strongly: many currents of thought do not recognize the truth as an epistemological possibility, and relevance is a virtually unexplored subject.⁸

That said, the decision to consider the truth and relevance to be quality parameters involves accepting the model of professional journalism developed by the tradition of Western democratic societies, especially in the US and UK (FRANCISCATO, 2005; CHALABY, 1998). However, critiques in academic theses should not be overlooked or disparaged. They are recognized and invited to play their part in the problem proposed here: providing parameters and methods for evaluating the products and processes of journalism. For my part, this is what I propose to do in this paper, based on the model established here.

The expectation of truth requires a factual basis for information. Society expects the news to deal in facts, so inventions, distortions and lies are considered serious breaches for a journalist. The information contained in the news should

be backed by evidence of veracity, such as documents, witnesses and records (images or sounds). And to obtain the information they need, journalists must use reliable methods such as interviews with reputable sources, direct observation and documentary research. Professionals are not required to disclose their methods when gathering news, given the timeframe and brevity of the story, but in theory, those methods should be documented and available for public scrutiny, if necessary.

The expectation of relevance in journalism is given the technical name of “news values.”⁹ They serve as an idealization of the real spectator, based on which journalists can predict who their interlocutors will be and what information they require. When news values or criteria are set according to the expectations of a particular audience, as systemized by a news organization that targets that audience, we have Benchmark News Values. They result from audience expectations incorporated by the organization, based on which it processes a number of definitions until it reaches the point of the best fit between these expectations and the organization’s ability to generate news.

There can be two orders of news values. Some are private, when determined by the specific

8 I recommend the following sources for readers interested in works that spotlight the problem discussed in this paper: Traquina (2001) and Gomes (2009), and, of course, Meditsch (1999), as mentioned above.

9 The view of news value as typifying the audience’s expectations of relevance is given by Guerra (2008). In this study, the entire discussion based on truth and relevance argues that such expectations of relevance justify, underlie and generate news values. This view seeks to go beyond the descriptive approach in studies of newsmaking from a strongly organizational perspective, precisely to enable the evaluation of news values used to select or exclude events and news.

demands of groups of individuals, regarding their particular tastes and preferences. In this sense, they vary from one audience to another. Therefore, each organization can operate with its own set of news values, depending on its target audience. They are public when the issue at hand is whether a matter is of public interest. In democratic societies, journalism is one of the areas that are most required to fulfill the public's right to information. As a result, the public interest is presented as a Universal News Value Benchmark. Considering news values and audience expectations, and therefore using them as quality parameters for assessing the journalistic relevance of news stories, requires taking these two orders into account.

In making the public interest a Universal News Value Benchmark, one is saying it constitutes a necessary expectation of the audience, on the one hand, and a necessary attribute of the news, on the other. Three reasons can be indicated for this: a) journalistic information constitutes a major source of access to citizens' right to

information (GENTILLI, 2005), b) it contributes to the formation of an agenda of issues based on which citizens will discuss and form their own convictions about the most diverse spheres of social life (GOMES, 2004), and c) it has a potential "public impact," that is, it could have real consequences in people's lives, whether or not they are part of a given news organization's real audience (GUERRA, 2008, p. 235).

The relationship of organizations with their audiences therefore goes beyond any claim that the parameters of relevance are entirely covered by a purely private contract between content producers and receivers. The publication of news not only constitutes a public offering of information on which individuals base their actions in the world but can also affect people's lives regardless of the intent of the issuer of the news or the audience for which it is intended.

Assuming, then, that truth and relevance (divided into two orders of news values) are parameters

10 The news values would enable journalists to draw up a profile of their "model reader" or "imaginary reader." According to Eco, "... the text posits the reader's cooperation as an inherent condition for being up to date. We can also say that the text is a product whose interpretive fate should be part of the generative mechanism itself. Producing a text means implementing a strategy that includes predictions of the movements of others – in fact, like any strategy" (ECO, 2002, p. 39). However, he adds, "predicting the Model Reader does not mean merely 'hoping' they exist, but also moving the text in order to build it. The text does not just reside in a competence but helps to reproduce it" (op. cit., p. 40). And as for the imaginary reader: "Early research into the communicator-audience relationship drew on the theory of Herbert Mead (1934) and, before him, Charles Cooley (1908), especially by picking up the idea of an 'imaginary interlocutor.' The essence of the theory is that in order to communicate we need to have some known 'reference person' or group to whom we can address ourselves, as well as having a shared cultural and social space and a common language" (MCQUAIL, 1997, p. 112).

11 Benchmark News Values are those used by organizations. But there are also Potential News Values, which represent the expectations found in society, as well as potential audiences that have not yet been incorporated into the news organizations. Potential News Values present opportunities for journalists to innovate news content (GUERRA, 2008).having a shared cultural and social space and a common language" (MCQUAIL, 1997, p. 112).

for journalistic quality, we must consider two important factors for organizational performance: efficiency and effectiveness. Efficiency “means the achievement of results with minimal resources” (CHIAVENATO, 2007, p. 342). Efficiency measures the organization’s internal satisfaction regarding the cost of its work. In the case of a news organization, efficiency is assessed on the basis of the expenditure and effort with which the organization strives to arrive at news that meets the quality parameters considered (truth and relevance). The closer the organization comes to reaching these parameters with the least production effort, the greater its efficiency.

Effectiveness, in turn, is a measure of how well an organization achieves its goals. In this case, the goal is considered to be producing accurate news stories that are relevant to the audience. According to Chiavenato (2007, p. 342), “effectiveness assesses the output side of the system and deals with the implementation of goals: doing what was planned. Measures of effectiveness should reflect whether the desired results are being achieved.” By producing factual and relevant news stories, the news organization has been effective. But if the news produced contains errors and is irrelevant, it can be said that the organization has not done its job effectively.

The challenge news organizations face will therefore be to manage the efficiency and effectiveness of their production process to achieve the best result for the field of journalism,

that is, to provide a product that meets the expectations of the public and their audience. Efficiency results in productivity gains for the organization, which is one type of reward that is sought. Effectiveness results in the audience’s satisfaction, which induces them to continue being the clients of an organization that meets their expectations. A better relationship between efficiency and effectiveness will lead to efficacy: “being effective means that the process has met the proposed objectives with optimum use of resources” (JORNET, 2006, p. 28, our translation).

The pursuit of effective quality management is essential to any self-sustaining organization. An organization that over-commits resources to achieve the desired quality can become unwieldy, jeopardizing its survival, the jobs it creates and the benefits it provides to society. Thus, the pursuit of quality must be linked to the rational use of available resources in order to combine quality service and corporate social responsibility with sustainability.

3 Quality Management Systems in Journalism: initial guidelines

Any model for quality management in journalism must therefore conciliate the pursuit of quality with effective performance. This requires quality, as an organizational goal, to pervade the organization’s entire structure, from top management to rank-and-file employees, and it must be present throughout the organization, thereby helping achieve an end-product that

meets previously set standards. Thus, we return to the three basic requirements for the initial model of quality management system proposed for news organizations: commitments and organizational structure, production processes and products.

With regard to commitments and organizational structure, the challenge is to evaluate a group of items that provide the basis for qualifying the organization to practice good journalism. In this group, it is not the parameters themselves (truth and relevance) that are evaluated, but the organization's presumed ability to achieve them. This involves taking seven aspects into consideration:

a) the organization's actual environmental conditions for practicing journalism: these conditions can be external and internal. The external environmental conditions include the existence of a strong market capable of generating diversified revenue streams so as to reduce the risk of financial dependence on major advertisers; as well as the existence of a political and legal environment that ensures the basic freedoms necessary for practicing journalism, etc. An analysis of these factors allows a detailed assessment of the organization's opportunities and risks for performing its job to a high standard. Internal environmental conditions include the degree of incorporation of technology, capacity building and training of its staff, resources and equipment necessary for news coverage, etc. An analysis of these internal factors can assess the organization's potential

performance. The organization must have broad and deep expertise in all of these areas, since it can only plan its operations to ensure the quality of its journalistic products on the basis of such environmental awareness.

b) affirmation of democratic values as principles of editorial action: if public interest is a Universal News Value Benchmark, it is key for the organization to be committed to the structuring principles of democratic life and guarantee the rights of journalism and its duty to society. Accordingly, the assessment seeks to identify the existence of an editorial policy in which organizational commitments to these principles and values are documented and made public.

c) management's tendency to pursue best journalistic practices: in addition to incorporating democratic values into editorial activities, it is essential for management, which has a strong influence on the organization's entire staff, to be actively engaged in advocating and implementing these principles, thereby providing both the means and mechanisms for their fulfillment as permanent mechanisms for the assessment of their proper implementation.

d) a focus on the needs and expectations of society and its audience: society gives news organizations numerous guarantees of freedom of the press, and in return, it is essential to be in sync with society's demands. Furthermore, the specific segment of that society that constitutes the organization's real audience has specific

characteristics that must be respected and served as far as possible, as long as the organization meets a legitimate demand for information without endangering or harming values related to the public interest. The assessment of this item seeks to analyze the organization's concerns and means of monitoring and surveying the expectations it aims to meet.

e) a clear and precise statement of editorial guidelines: the organization must document its editorial guidelines clearly and unequivocally in order to state its commitments publicly and provide suitable in-house guidance for the work of its professional staff. In this case, the assessment must identify the existence of documents and organizational procedures that underscore such guidelines.

f) concepts and specifications for processes and products: the guidelines must be detailed so as to accurately characterize the attributes required for products, as well as the appropriate means and procedures for obtaining them. Such procedures are essential guidelines to be incorporated into the production routine to ensure uniformity of action and team alignment with the highest values the organization espouses and provide clear benchmarks for assessing quality and performance. Here, the assessment also seeks to identify the existence of such guidelines in order to ensure that quality benchmarks can be consistently understood and applied by all members of the organization.

g) the existence of managerial mechanisms capable of effectively implementing production processes while maintaining an ongoing system of self-evaluation of its practices: the organization must provide the necessary means for journalistic production, including work plans set out with clear goals and responsibilities, adequate human and material resources and reliable indicators of performance and quality that have been validated and are easily understood. Consequently, the organization needs to demonstrate that it has a systematic evaluation of its editorial results in place with a view to demonstrating that it can meet the expectations it has set for itself.

These seven elements have been presented in general terms, as the basic prerequisites for signaling the conditions that qualify the organization to be accredited to practice good journalism, including the motivation and commitment of its leaders, labor management, and adequate human resources and materials, among others. If the organization does not establish such conditions, it will be nearly impossible for it effectively to implement journalistic practice that leads to excellence.

In relation to production processes, the assessment should evaluate the consistency of production plans for the aspects contained in the item "commitments and organizational structure." This is intended to assess whether the overall manifesto of intent in the first set of requirements

is actually performed when work processes are completed. There are four aspects to consider:

a) the levels of efficiency and effectiveness of production processes: the organization should develop procedures that consistently lead to organizational goals and commitments. Processes should target the attributes of products – such as truth and relevance – which must be achieved with an optimum cost-results ratio. The assessment should consider whether the time and resources used in production work are compatible.

b) suitable tools adapted to processes: to meet the requirements for products, the organization must have suitable tools (software, documents, books, equipment, etc.) that are associated with processes in order to avoid problems and limitations that could compromise performance and quality targets. The assessment considers whether such tools are available and suitable for the team's systematic work process.

c) procedures compatible with specifications: because it is the organization that determines specifications for its products, work procedures must be assessed and, if necessary, redirected to comply with those specifications in order to adapt to the organizational effort as a whole. The assessment should therefore determine whether the procedures lead to the expected results.

d) suitably prepared people: to implement processes, establish procedures and meet specifications, it is key for the people responsible

for such operational decisions to be properly prepared and motivated to do so. The assessment seeks to determine whether the staff has received and is receiving continuous, ongoing training to carry out the process within the desired standards.

Finally, with regard to products, the goal is to establish an evaluation system to determine whether the organization's results are in line with the expectations of society and its audience. These requirements must basically fit into two categories: material, concerning the physical characteristics of the product, and content, in relation to the information published:

a) material requirements: related to product attributes, such as aesthetic features, copy-editing and proofing, technological support, format, etc. These requirements are directly associated with the presentation and availability of the product to the audience. The assessment should consider whether the way the product is presented and published is well-suited to the expectations the organization aims to meet.

b) content requirements: related to three aspects – the truthfulness of the information, relevance, and ethics. In the first case – truthfulness – one evaluates whether the information is supported by facts; in the second, whether the information meets the needs and expectations of society and the audience; in the third case, if the information complies with the values of professional and social conduct, specifically related to democratic values and the common good. The assessment

therefore compares the news that is reported with journalistic criteria that validate and assign value to information.

Both these three categories of requirements and the various aspects covered by each of them represent a very brief charting of the set of elements and nuances that must necessarily be considered in an assessment of quality. Far from exhausting the subject, the list presented here is merely intended to suggest possibilities to be explored and better understood in future research.

4 Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to present the preliminary results of a study that is still in progress. Strictly from the standpoint of the debate on quality, it is important to understand how the issue has gained prominence and, more importantly, the effort being made by agents to chart ways of evaluating results for news organizations on the basis of clear criteria and objectives.

This challenge will certainly involve a clash from the theoretical point of view in studies of journalism, considering that the values enshrined by such tools – such as the commitment to truth and relevance – are contested by several scholarly currents in that field. And this presents an additional obstacle to meeting this challenge, considering that, as in other areas, in order to function there must be a broad consensus regarding the principles and benchmarks of quality among the various actors involved.

At any rate, this issue for the field of journalism forces us to debate our theoretical ability to generate results for an activity that is professional, and therefore requires ways to assess gains and losses through academic studies. In this sense, it drives us to produce applied research¹² aimed at finding common standards for gauging good journalism, the professional means that are necessary and effective for achieving those standards, and the pursuit of innovation,¹³ seeking continuous improvement, etc. In short, new scholarly horizons are opening

12 Eva Stal defines applied research on the basis of the Oslo Manual (a publication of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development): “It is an original study based on the interest in acquiring new knowledge, but focused primarily on a specific practical aim. It is carried out either to determine possible uses for the findings of basic research, or to establish new methods or ways to achieve a certain specific and pre-set goal. It involves consideration of available knowledge and its expansion with a view to solving specific problems” (STAL, 2007, p. 31)

13 The definition of “innovation” is highly controversial. According to Moreira and Queiroz (2007, pp. 9-10), “the most prevalent tendency...is that innovation is not considered an external object and that its novelty is determined by the perception of the social unit that adopts it (ZALTAN; DUNCAN; HOLBEK, 1973; JOHANNESSEN; OLSEN; LUMPKIN, 2001). In these terms, a practice can be an innovation for one organization but not for another.” Based on Knight (1967), Moreira and Queiroz have classified four types of innovation on the basis of focuses: the product or service; the production process; the organizational structures and people (MOREIRA; QUEIROZ, 2007, pp. 9 -10). Another classification of types of innovation is the Oslo Manual, according to Stal (2007): incremental innovation, the introduction of any kind of improvement in a product, process or organization of production within a company, without changing the industrial structure; radical innovation, the introduction of an entirely new product, process or organization of production (STAL, 2007, p. 32).

up, enabling us to take a fresh look at problems and approaches, as well as the results we expect to achieve through our scientific activities in the field of journalism.

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Sistema de Gestão de Qualidade aplicado ao Jornalismo: possibilidades e diretrizes

Resumo:

O artigo reflete sobre as possibilidades de desenvolvimento de um sistema de gestão e avaliação de qualidade para organizações jornalísticas. Analisa dificuldades, como ausência de métodos objetivos para aferição das características dos produtos e a falta de consenso acerca dos valores e requisitos desejáveis. E aponta desafios: construir métodos confiáveis, obter valores consensuais e gerar inovação para produtos e processos decorrentes das avaliações realizadas. Define um conceito de qualidade e propõe dois requisitos básicos, verdade e relevância. Conclui com a apresentação de uma proposta preliminar de sistema de gestão da qualidade assentada em três partes: a) compromissos e estrutura organizacional; b) processos de produção; e c) produtos.

Palavras-chave:

Jornalismo. Qualidade. Inovação.

Sistema de Gestión de la Calidad aplicado al periodismo: posibilidades y directrices

Resumen:

Este artículo reflexiona sobre las posibilidades de desarrollar un sistema de gestión y evaluación de calidad para las organizaciones periodísticas. Analiza dificultades como la falta de métodos objetivos para medir las características de los productos y la falta de consenso sobre los valores y requisitos deseables. En él se apuntan desafíos: construir métodos fiables para obtener los valores de consenso y generar la innovación necesaria de los productos y procesos derivados de las evaluaciones. Se propone definir un concepto de calidad con dos requisitos básicos: verdad y relevancia. El artículo concluye con la presentación de una propuesta preliminar del sistema de gestión de la calidad, fundamentada en tres partes: a) los compromisos y la estructura organizativa; b) los procesos de producción; y c) los productos.

Palabras clave:

Periodismo. Calidad. Innovación.

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