CENSORSHIP, PSYCHOLOGICAL REACTANCE AND CREATIVITY: FIVE COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES FOR DESIGNING COMMUNITY GUIDELINES

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how to design community guidelines by reducing the audience's psychological reactance in order to build a polite and secure online community as well as to promote the community creativity. The study first explains why we need community guidelines, as an explicit and formal form of censorship. Then censorship is defined to prove that community guidelines in nature are an essential construct of society that cannot be categorized simply as a destructive or repressive force. After that, psychological reactance theory is introduced in relation to censorship and the framing of creativity is clarified in order to make the statement that it is the psychological reactance elicited by censorship that could hinder creativity, not censorship itself. Because of the negative effects brought by psychological reactance to creativity, five specific communication strategies are proposed to offer practical advice on how to make an online community more creative through the way censorship is presented: (1) reduce the use of high-controlling language; (2) add restoration postscripts; (3) increase message novelty; (4) include narrative; (5) improve clarity of request. In addition, limitations of this project are illustrated and suggestions for further validating and improving the strategies are discussed.

Keywords: community guidelines, censorship, communication strategies, psychological reactance, participatory creativity

1.0   INTRODUCTION

User-generated content (UGC) usually refers to the online material that is either produced or refashioned by regular people and accessible to general users of the internet (Krumm, Davies, & Narayanaswami, 2008; "User-Generated Content," 2016). User-generated content as well as the online platforms adopting and supporting such content generation and distribution method both have been growing rapidly in recent years (Susarla, Oh, & Tan, 2012; Zhang & Sarvary, 2015). However, in the meantime, many online communities are also increasingly being used to promote problematic, offensive and inappropriate messages or ideas such as violence, racism, terrorism and child pornography (Gerrard, 2018). Such situation indicates that user-generated content represents serious challenges to the quality of content despite the empowering opportunities it is offering (Zhang & Sarvary, 2015). In order to present and maintain high or good quality of content

for legal or ethical reasons, content moderation is needed. To moderate online content, lots of platforms choose to introduce community guidelines as explicit censorship in its formal form of an official list of what to do and what not to do, also known as an Index (Petley, 2012). Community guidelines are formal rules of conduct reflecting behavioral norms and expectations within an online community and requiring users to behave in advocated ways that may be enforced by moderators ("Community Guidelines", 2016). Censorship can be defined as the official prohibition or restriction of any type of expression believed to threaten the political, social, moral or religious order, which may be applied to various mediums including the press, art, literature, the cinema, radio, television, or computer networks, may be imposed by governmental authority, by a religious body, or by a powerful private group and may be either preventive or punitive, depending on whether it is exercised before or after the expression has been made public ("Censorship", 2018; "Censorship", 2016).

When the individual subjectively perceives something such as community guidelines or someone such as the corporation or organization making the guidelines as a threat to their freedom, his or her psychological reactance will be activated (Brehm, 1966). Psychological reactance is a motivational state to restore the threatened or lost freedom and any event increasing the perceived difficulty of having or not having a potential outcome could threaten the exercise of a freedom in the eyes of the individual (Brehm & Brehm, 1981).

The more directive and controlling a persuasive message is perceived to be, the more likely its position or idea conveyed through the message is to be rejected emotionally, cognitively or behaviorally (Miller, Lane, Deatrick, Young, & Potts, 2007). Higher levels of psychological reactance might lead to higher levels of negative emotions such as anger, more negative cognitive evaluations of the message, less intention to behave in advocated ways and more negative perceptions of source credibility (Miller et al., 2007). In some cases, individuals will even be motivated to resist or act counter to attempted social influence, as a behavioral way of restoring their freedom and control (Brehm & Brehm, 1981). Due to the negative outcomes mentioned before, we have to minimize the generation of the audience's psychological reactance to perceived censorship that threatens their freedom when formulating community guidelines.

Reducing psychological reactance of the audience not only helps achieve the purpose of creating a safe and civilized online space, but also facilitates creativity as a socio-cultural-psychological process or as a form of cultural participation within an online community so that users of the online community could be better encouraged to participate in creativity and the online community could be more creative as well (Glăveanu, 2010). By drawing inspiration from a participatory perspective of creativity, this paper takes the position that creativity is a social, cultural and psychological event with the ideas or creative ideas being inherently social, not exclusively mental, psychological or individual (Clapp, 2016; Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; Glăveanu, 2010).

Community guidelines, as an explicit and formal form of censorship, stress rules which reflect social and cultural norms. In a way, the community guidelines are visible representations of socio-cultural impact. The dynamics of an online community regulated by such rules construct a socio-cultural context for individuals to participate in creativity. After all, as established before, a purely person-centered and individualistic view of creativity is not advocated here. That is to say, creativity does not exist in a social vacuum without being influenced by any external restriction and it is not something that can only be expressed by the genius or the eminent creator (Clapp, 2016). It is the community that makes creativity manifest, not the individual (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999). So, we need to build a community where creativity is encouraged and supported.

However, it needs to be kept in mind that one should never ignore the value of individual agency as well as intentional effort in the collective idea development process since ideas do not develop themselves simply when there is a socio-cultural context with individuals physically being present (Clapp, 2016; Glăveanu, 2010). To put it differently, the audience of community guidelines needs to actively and purposefully interpret and act on such rules in order to produce creative ideas and to help build a creative online community instead of merely feeling hostile to the moderators or refusing to adapt to socio-cultural demands altogether.

The goal of this study is to promote the creativity of an online community by improving the design of community guidelines, which are a form of censorship. Community guidelines are formal rules of conduct reflecting behavioral norms and expectations within an online community and requiring users to behave in advocated ways that may be enforced by moderators ("Community Guidelines", 2016). Specific communication strategies to reach that goal will be presented by taking into consideration of community guidelines, censorship, psychological reactance, participatory creativity and persuasive communication. The flow of logic of this paper can be described as follows. Community guidelines are currently critical for the healthy and civilized development of an online community, but will presenting and enforcing community guidelines in some ways hurt the community creativity and how can we use community guidelines to promote creativity? To answer that question, we have to discuss the nature of community guidelines first to see whether or not community guidelines are fundamentally destructive for creativity. There is no way of arguing that community guidelines can be used to facilitate creativity if they are fundamentally destructive and should be removed. Once we have clarified the nature of censorship, we then can move on to explaining how psychological reactance elicited by censorship could hinder creativity. In other words, although censorship itself is not hurting creativity, the individual's response to censorship can block the creative process. Based on all the considerations above and the inspiration drawn from persuasive communication, five specific communication strategies can be formulated to help an online community become more creative while staying safe and polite through the use of community guidelines.

2.0   LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   User-Generated Content, Community Guidelines and Censorship

User-generated content (UGC) usually refers to the online material that is either produced or refashioned by regular people and accessible to general users of the internet (Krumm, Davies, & Narayanaswami, 2008; "User-Generated Content," 2016). When situated in a broader context, user-generated content can also be defined as any content produced by the audience or users of a certain medium ("User-Generated Content," 2016). This paper will adopt the most popular definition of user-generated content, which places content-creation initiated by the audience in the online context. Such user-generated content can take the form of pictures, videos, text and audio (Berthon, Pitt, Kietzmann, & McCarthy, 2015; Krumm et al., 2008; Susarla et al., 2012).

Video or photo sharing sites such as YouTube and Instagram, social networking platforms such as Facebook and online discussion websites such as Reddit all rely heavily on user-generated content and have been growing significantly in recent years (Susarla et al., 2012; Zhang & Sarvary, 2015).

There is a great deal of evidence showing that lots of social media platforms including Twitter, Facebook and YouTube are being used to spread hate, abuse and extremism, pushing involved

companies to publish community guidelines in order to fulfil relevant legal or moral obligations (Home Affairs Committee, 2017). Community guidelines play the role of policing the digital communities. For example, YouTube informs its users in the Community Guidelines about what is and isn't allowed in the community and what would happen if there is a violation (YouTube, n.d.). Another similar example would be Facebook introducing a set of rules through its Community Standards, such as prohibiting people from promoting or publicizing violent crime, theft, and/or fraud or restricting the display of nudity or sexual activity (Facebook, n.d.).

Different social media platforms might call their community guidelines in different ways, but such rules can all be defined as explicit censorship in its formal form of an official list, also known as an Index (Petley, 2012). Censorship refers to a variety of formal and informal, overt and covert, conscious and unconscious, explicit and implicit processes by which restrictions are imposed on the collection, display, dissemination, and exchange of information, opinions, ideas and imaginative expression (Jones, 2001). Censorship exists in democratic societies as well as in authoritarian ones (Petley, 2012). There are different categories of censorship and different methods of categorizing censorship. In International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, censorship is divided into four groups: political censorship, religious censorship, censorship of obscenity and censorship affecting academic freedom based on the content that is being censored (Abraham, 1968). In Collier's Encyclopedia, church censorship, state censorship and private censorship are identified based on the various agents of censorship (Kirk, 1985). Moreover, censorship can prevent certain words and images from being produced in the first place as well as remove certain words and images after they are publicly available (Petley, 2012).

2.2 Censorship as Conceptualized by New Censorship Theory

Revolving around censorship, different theories have been formulated in order to analyze relevant situations. The dominant view in contemporary societies regarding censorship is the liberal conception of censorship, which sees censorship as external, coercive, and repressive (Bunn, 2015). In liberal thought, as authoritative figures, censors are extrinsic to the communicative process by using coercive force to interfere with the free exchange of ideas between willing individuals in civil society (Cohen, 1994). The censor represents a "third party" to communication and stands outside of communication since it is imposing norms and regulations that are not inherently a part of the communication context (Bunn, 2015).

There are, however, alternative perspectives to censorship. New censorship theory intends to recast censorship from a negative and repressive force whose tasks cannot be separated from prohibiting, silencing, and erasing, to a productive force that creates new forms of discourse and communication (Bunn, 2015). In other words, new censorship theory tries to reinterpret the characteristics as well as effects of censorship by denying the dichotomy of free speech and censorship (Butler, 1997). According to such theory, censorship is a ubiquitous phenomenon or even inevitable part of communication that can be enacted by a range of actors including impersonal and structural conditions (Butler, 1997; Bunn, 2015).

The new censorship theory is partially derived from Marxist theory because Marxism rejects the essential logic underlying the liberal notion of censorship, which is free speech exists outside of censorship (Bunn, 2015). For Marx, censorship is a construct or an ideology requested by civil society as a sphere of market relationships and the principle agents of domination are ruling classes instead of absolutist states (Bunn, 2015). Censorship should not be seen as a solely

destructive or repressive force, but as a constitutive activity that can be constructive of cultural expression through establishing boundaries and limitations (Sherry, 2018).

This study will employ the lens of new censorship theory and acknowledge the point that the structure of all societies requires the existence of censorship because such existence indicates one part of the logic of all societies, which is that knowledge and power are inseparably intertwined (Jansen, 1988). Censorship is not simply a repressive force enacted by the authorities or their designated institutions, but a complex interplay of practices, embedded in all areas of society and performed by a wide range of agents including governmental institutions, business corporations, cultural producers and ordinary individuals (Petley, 2012; Sherry, 2018). Censorship is carried out by any real individual or citizen with all the cultural, ideological and political baggage, showing that censorship is not detached from society, but in fact deeply rooted in it (Sherry, 2018).

This study explicitly supports new censorship theory to prevent any misunderstanding of the act of promoting the use of censorship as depicted in this paper as an endorsement of the purely repressive application of power (Sherry, 2018). Furthermore, the nature of censorship is discussed to clarify its interpretation. If censorship were perceived as inherently destructive or repressive, the entire logic of the paper would be undermined. This is because something already destructive in nature cannot logically be seen as facilitating creativity.

When detailing the relationship between user-generated content and community guidelines, it is explained directly why we need censorship when participating in online activities. Here, the fundamental nature of censorship has been explored in order to strengthen the theoretical and moral ground of advocating community guidelines.

2.3   Psychological Reactance Theory

Psychological reactance theory (PRT) was proposed by Jack W. Brehm in 1966. Psychological reactance is an unpleasant motivational reaction to a person, a group or rules threatening or eliminating the perceived specific freedoms of the individual and it occurs when the individual feels or thinks that someone or something is completely taking away their choices or restricting their freedom at some level (Brehm, 1966). Psychological reactance theory holds that a threat to or loss of a freedom motivates the individual to restore that freedom or to maintain the freedom to choose when and how to behave (Brehm, 1966; Rosenberg & Siegel, 2017; Brehm & Brehm, 1981).

It was clarified that any event that increases the perceived difficulty of attaining a potential outcome for an individual can be classified as a threat to the exercise of a freedom (Brehm & Brehm, 1981). As a motivational state, when psychological reactance is aroused, it can result in affective, cognitive and behavioral responses, ranging from experiencing frustration and unpleasantness, showing hostility toward the source of a threat, counter-arguing and increasing resistance to persuasion, directly engaging in the restricted behavior to increasing the desire for the lost option (Behrouzian, Nisbet, Dal, & Carkoglu, 2016; Nezlek & Brehm, 1975; Quick & Stephenson, 2007; Brehm & Brehm, 1981).

Although something that is considered as a threat to one's freedom in one specific context might be considered to be legitimate in a different detailed context, it is true that from an audience perspective, censorship can be perceived as a threat to freedom, the free exchange of information or the individual's control and choice of what to express and how to publish content (Behrouzian et

al., 2016; Jonas et al., 2009; Wang & Mark, 2015). For citizens or audiences, it is the freedom allowed by censorship they perceive that is important for them, not the actual or institutional supply of media freedom (Behrouzian et al., 2016). In general, freedom of behavior is a highly-valued and pervasive aspect of all people's lives (Brehm, 1966). When that freedom is threatened or lost, people become motivated to restore it, which is the core concept of psychological reactance theory (Brehm, 1966; Brehm & Brehm, 1981).

Subjectivity is deeply embedded in psychological reactance. What is a freedom, what is a threat to that freedom and how to restore the freedom once reactance is aroused are all personal and subjective processes experienced and determined by an individual. In other words, reactance can only be aroused when an individual believeshe or she has a freedom to do or not to do something (Brehm & Brehm, 1981). Different people may act differently towards the same potential threat. Some may experience reactance while others don't. Some may respond very strongly to the threat while others may only respond mildly.

According to Brehm & Brehm (1981), there are some principles about the implications of the theory: (1) reactance can be aroused in a person only to the extent that the individual believes he or she has a freedom or control over a potential outcome; (2) the amount of reactance aroused by a threat will depend on the importance or attractiveness of the alternatives. The greater is the importance of the threatened freedom, the greater will be the amount of reactance aroused; (3) the amount of reactance aroused by a given threat is a direct function of the number of freedoms threatened. Eliminating a single freedom will cause less intense reactance compared with removing the freedom to do something at all times; (4) freedoms can be threatened by implication, and therefore the magnitude of reactance is increased when implied threats occur.

2.4   Creativity Viewed from a Participatory Perspective

The modern interest in creative capacities and potential began around 1950 and stemmed from the mental-testing or psychometric movement in the United States (Weisberg, 2006). In the past, creativity in psychology usually was looked at from only one angle: the individual one, highlighting the cognitive processes, personality traits and developmental antecedents associated with individual creators (Glăveanu, 2010; Simonton, 2003). However, creativity research in recent years has been increasingly informed by a participatory perspective to examine how people participate in creativity rather than possess or exemplify creativity, which is a relatively accurate reflection of real life (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; Hanson, 2015).

From a participatory perspective, creativity is defined as a socio-cultural-psychological process or as a form of cultural participation. The participatory approach proposes that variables internal as well as external to the individual should both be taken into account when exploring why, how, when and where new ideas or products arise from and become established in a culture (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; Glăveanu, 2010; Gruber &Davis, 1988). Creativity is individual because individuals' knowledge, abilities, time and effort are needed during any creative process (Clapp, 2016; Glăveanu, 2010). Creativity is also socio-cultural, which can be explained from aspects: individuals' set of skills and types of knowledge that are important for the production of the creative outcome are developed through social interaction; creativity often involves collaboration between individuals; creativity is defined by social judgment to a great extent; creativity won't exist without a set of established cultural norms and products supporting the creative process and integrating the creative outcomes (Clapp, 2016; Glăveanu, 2010).

According to Csikszentmihalyi (1999), creativity is a process that can be observed only at the intersection where individuals, domains and fields interact. Domain is a cultural aspect, referring to a set of already existing objects, rules and representations. Field is a social aspect and it could also be interpreted as gatekeepers who can make decisions as to what should and should not be included in the domain. Based on such definitions, community guidelines can be seen as a domain. Policy-makers formulating community guidelines and moderators enforcing the guidelines will be regarded as a field. And the users of a certain online community are the individuals who interact with community guidelines as the domain and policy-makers as well as moderators as the field.

Censorship reflected through community guidelines is a concrete and visible one, offering us great opportunities to carefully and clearly design it in ways that better promote the creativity of an online community by contextualizing the message design in participatory creativity.

2.5   Psychological Reactance and Communication Research

The gap between the legitimacy of community guidelines as a form of censorship and the audience's possible perception of censorship as a repressive force that may elicit psychological reactance and therefore hurt the security and creativity of an online community calls for persuasive communication or reinterpretation of community guidelines. Persuasive communication is a communication that persuades and involves both internal aspects such as the receiver's beliefs and external aspects, including the message itself, the arguments presented, the credibility of the source and the medium used ("Persuasive Communication," 2009).

Although psychological reactance is a very subjective motivational state that heavily relies on the individual and the context the individual is in, psychological reactance theory still offers valuable guidance, particularly regarding what to do and what not to do when composing persuasive messages targeting very diverse and potentially reactant populations (Miller et al., 2007). That is to say, psychological reactance theory should be applied to persuasive strategy development (Rosenberg & Siegel, 2017). Based on psychological reactance theory, particular features of community guidelines could be carefully constructed in order to reduce the audience's reactance with the initial goal of creating a safe and polite online community and the ultimate purpose of promoting the creativity of the online community.

3.0   METHODS

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the subject and improve the effectiveness of the research, this paper uses secondary research methods (Ugwu & Eze, 2023). During data collection phase, existing data is compiled and obtained by utilizing information acquired through dictionaries, encyclopedias, journal articles, books, web pages, etc. As for data analysis phase, the approach of discourse analysis is used to learn about how communication style functions in different contexts or explore relationships between language-in-use and the social world (Johnson & McLean, 2020; Suciu, 2019).

4.0   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Compelling and convincing arguments do not always guarantee persuasion because persuasive communication could be perceived as threat to freedom (Jenkins & Dragojevic, 2013). Persuasive

messages advocate that the individual should take a certain position and perform some behavior or refrain from performing some behavior, making the messages a possible threat to the individual's autonomy in the eyes of the individual, which may further elicit psychological reactance (Jenkins & Dragojevic, 2013). By this definition, community guidelines can be positioned as persuasive messages.

Censorship can be explicit and implicit. The explicit censorship usually takes the formal form of an official list, also known as an Index (Petley, 2012). The implicit censorship is not officially recorded and can refer to the subtle signals related to censorship given by extremely powerful authoritative figures as well as self-censorship that is the act of censoring one's own expression for some reasons (Petley, 2012; Sherry, 2018). This study will focus on the explicit and formal form of censorship, whose limits of power are clearly articulated and decisions are open to challenge (Sherry, 2018).

Community guidelines are a very complex construct involving censorship, psychological reactance, creativity and persuasive communication. As a result, this study will take into consideration all those four factors in order to come up with valid suggestions for improving the design of community guidelines that might help relevant policy-makers of an online community ensure that the rules are well-received by the audience and the creativity of the community could be better supported.

4.1   Reduce the Use of High-Controlling Language

Requests using a forceful and high-controlling language (e.g., must, have to, should, need to) are more likely to be interpreted as restricting freedoms and arouse individuals' reactance while a polite language (e.g., might, could, perhaps, possibly, have the choice to) is less likely to produce such results (Miller et al., 2007; Quick & Considine, 2008). A high-controlling language tends to present advocated behaviors as something that must be done and may also include statements that demean anyone who disagrees with the advocated stance (Jenkins & Dragojevic, 2013).

However, a low-controlling and polite language is not perfect, either. Such autonomy-supportive messages could be oblique, ambiguous and vague, making it harder for the audience to quickly and easily understand the expectations incorporated in those messages while high-controlling messages are clear, brief, direct and efficient (Miller et al., 2007). There are advantages and disadvantages associated with a low-controlling and a high-controlling language, which eliminates the possibility of designing a simple message language construct that remains the most effective across all situations (Miller et al., 2007).

That said, higher levels of controlling language lead to higher levels of psychological reactance, which might consequently lead to higher levels of negative emotions, negative cognitive evaluations of the message, resistance to behave in advocated ways, and negative perceptions of the source (Miller et al., 2007). Even though a polite language makes it difficult to efficiently interpret a certain persuasive message, the negative outcomes of using a high-controlling language are hardly something that can be ignored or bypassed.

Balancing these two languages when constructing community guidelines targeting the general public requires careful consideration. One possible way is to present community guidelines in a more polite manner, but   in the meantime restrain the ambiguity or possibility of multiple interpretations (Miller et al., 2007). Instead of starting a censorship rule with the structure of "you should not do...", one could use "we sincerely hope you do not..." or "we would really appreciate it if you could follow the rule of...". After specifying the advocated behaviors, if needed, the policy maker

could then mention punishment   measures. In this case, it is recommended one should avoid explaining the punishment system by using the direct and forceful phrases, expression or language such as "you will be punished for...". Instead, one can say "if you fail to comply with the rule, we might...". The point of employing a polite language in community guidelines is to be respectful and sensitive in general about psychological states that the audience might have while not stating that the audience can freely choose to not follow relevant rules without causing any consequence. In other words, the audience is supposed to be given the essential and necessary information to make an informed choice without feeling forced to comply (Mirick, 2016). In addition to reducing the use of forceful language, policy-makers may also want to avoid persuasion attempts that greatly emphasize the punishment or negative consequences (Mirick, 2016).

If policy-makers insist on using a forceful and high-controlling language to present rules because it is more time-saving, precise and easily-understood, then the high-controlling language needs to be paired with other communication strategies such as restoration postscripts to minimize potential psychological reactance of the audience, which will be explained in detail in the following sections of the paper.

This communication strategy is supportive of community creativity because it can help individuals become more willing to accept relevant rules and to behave based on what is expected from them as articulated in the community guidelines. In other words, individuals will be less motivated to resist or act counter to attempted social influence and be more engaged in learning about the rules and regulations of a domain (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; Brehm & Brehm, 1981). Without knowing the rules of a domain, individuals cannot form creative ideas or participate in the creative process, let alone build a creative online community because creativity is inherently socio-cultural.

4.2   Add Restoration Postscripts

Including a postscript or reminder of the audience's freedom to choose at the end of a persuasive message could be another strategy to help restore threatened or lost freedom and to minimize the generation of psychological reactance in the audience (Miller et al., 2007; Brehm & Brehm, 1981). Suggesting that it is up to message recipients to make up their own mind and decide for themselves is a simple, elegant and effective way to help prevent the harmful effects that can be produced by psychological reactance (Miller et al., 2007). However, such communication strategy is more effective for high-threat messages rather than low-threat messages, which would further suggest that a high-controlling language should be used with postscripts to mitigate psychological reactance (Bessarabova, Fink, & Turner, 2013). Although previous research indicated that the restoration postscript was not significantly effective for low-threat messages, postscript can still be incorporated in the community guidelines with a low-controlling language as a way of improving the general politeness of restrictions.

Based on the considerations indicated above, some possible examples to add restoration scripts could be as follows: "you are the active agent who is going to decide how to create and disseminate content by appropriately understanding and applying these guidelines in practice", "although we are the ones who create the censorship rules in the first place, it will eventually be up to you to bring the true value and significance of such rules into being", "we only clarify what is supposed to be publicly available and what is not, but what matters the most is what happens in real life, which will be the decisions and efforts made by you".

Community guidelines will only arouse psychological reactance when the requests embedded in the guidelines are perceived as restrictions on free behaviors by individuals (Mirick, 2016). Even though the core meaning of a certain censorship message is to ask the message receiver to do or not to do something during information exchange, the policy-maker could present such rule or persuasive message in a way that appears to provide a choice for the receiver at some level or to some extent. In this manner, the communication strategy of adding restoration postscripts could supplement the strategy of using a low-controlling and polite language through the construction of a context of choice even though it is mostly symbolic rather than practical. Similar to the first strategy, by reducing psychological reactance, postscripts can encourage the audience to get to know the rules of a domain set by a field and to participate in relevant online activities with community guidelines in mind, which in the end would facilitate the creativity of a community since there are so many active and positive interactions between the individual, the field and the domain.

4.3 Increase Message Novelty

Message novelty could be a useful method of drawing attention away from controlling or forceful aspects of persuasive communications by increasing the message sensation value (Morgan, Palmgreen, Stephenson, Hoyle, & Lorch, 2003). Message sensation value (MSV) is defined as the degree to which the format and content features of a televised or audio-visual message elicit sensory, affective and arousal responses (Palmgreen et al., 1991, p. 219).

This position or theorizing is supported by several studies including the one conducted by Quick, which found out that adolescents reported decreased perceptions of freedom threat when they perceived messages to possess high-novelty (Quick, 2013). When messages are creative, appealing and attention-drawing, their communication power or potential to positively influence the audience's perceptions and behaviors would be strengthened as well (Lu, Chi, & Lu, 2017). By building on such ground, community guidelines could be made to give the impression of being less controlling through the help of various forms of representation such as sound and images.

For instance, a video or a series of videos with vivid pictures and subtitles can be made in order to illustrate the community guidelines while also adding suitable background music, narrator's voice or sound effects to the video or videos. In addition, the moving images can take the form of animation. Beside adopting moving images, the community guidelines creator could also consider using still images such as photos or drawings to keep the audience interested and their attention away from the directive side of the guidelines.

However, not all individuals have a strong need for external stimuli that can be found in audio-visual materials. Those who desire high-levels of sensational arousal or external stimuli would be more attracted to messages with higher message sensation value while people who prefer less intense stimuli would like to receive messages with lower message sensation value (Everett & Palmgreen, 1995). For this reason, it is still necessary to produce a purely textual version of community guidelines. But it is important to generate audio-visual versions as well in order to increase the possibility of making community guidelines appeal to the group of individuals that are sensation-seeking.

This communication strategy will be supporting the creativity of an online community by acknowledging the individual agency, which is an inevitable part of creativity. Policy-makers should encourage the users enact their individual agency throughout the creative process in ways that capitalize on the best that each user has to bring to the process (Clapp, 2016). Different from the first and the second strategy, increasing message novelty by using or adding some audio-visual

materials actually gives the users of an online community a choice: to learn about the rules through text, images or videos. The situation where they can decide on how they learn can help create a more creative community by allowing individuals to make full use of their preferred ways of learning or most powerful learning styles.

4.4   Include Narrative

A well-contextualized narrative has the potential to reduce the audience's psychological reactance through fostering para-social interaction and decreasing perceptions of persuasive intent (Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010). Narrative tends to increase message receivers' identification with specific characters (Rosenberg & Siegel, 2017). Moyer-Gusé and Nabi (2010) carried out a study that examined the connections between story features such as involvement with characters and resistance to persuasion. They concluded that a dramatic narrative existing in a TV show could induce less reactance in the audience compared with a non-narrative radio program or news broadcast on the topic of educating students about safe sex (Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010; Rosenberg & Siegel, 2017).

The reactance-reducing impact that a narrative may possess to a certain extent, is related to empathy. Arousing empathy in the audience can help inhibit people's anger and counter-argumentation (Shen, 2010). The research results analyzed by Shen (2010) suggested that empathy could reduce psychological reactance, thus indirectly affecting the effectiveness of persuasive messages. This finding could be utilized by creating an additional version of community guidelines, resembling the way that novelty is embedded in the guidelines. Relatable story characters and stories can be created in articles, audio-recordings and videos to further detail what the guidelines are, how they are implemented and why it is important to have them.

As explained by Clapp (2016), a user is a participant in a socially distributed idea development process. Different participants have different personalities and different personalities do not always get along. Therefore, things will not always run smoothly during the creative process. In this context, we can view users as participant A, policy-makers as participant B. We will further assume participant A has a different personality than participant B. In order to smooth out social tensions, we can add the element of empathy to help participant B better communicate his or her ideas and expectations so that participant A and participant B can reach a mutual understanding and agreement and can continue the creative process.

4.5   Improve Clarity of Request

Another reactance reduction strategy that can be employed in constructing community guidelines is to improve clarity of request, i.e. clarity of the things that creators of community guidelines are asking their users to do or not to do based on specific reasonable considerations. The requests that are perceived as clear, legitimate and fair, even if they may restrict freedoms in fact, are unlikely to trigger reactance (Zhang & Sapp, 2013). Request clarity can be increased with transparency about several aspects of the request, including reasons for and objectives of the request (Mirick, 2016). Findings also indicate that messages using a concrete language receive more attention and higher-levels of importance from the message recipients while generating more positive assessments of the source (Miller et al., 2007). Fundamentally, clarity clearly defines the scope of the request, which is helpful in trying to reduce the audience's psychological reactance because individuals are less likely to respond to a smaller request with reactance than a larger one (Mirick, 2016). The vagueness of policies or requests can result in higher rates of reactance (Ball & Goodboy, 2014).

Based on this consideration, when organizing community guidelines, one should specify the criteria for censoring certain content and the reasons for adopting the guidelines. Furthermore, online discussions, virtual live Q&A sessions and an online list of most common censorship-relevant questions with answers attached can be set up or arranged in order to increase clarity (Mirick, 2016). The sessions should be carried out in a consistent manner. The discussions and the list should be updated in a timely fashion. Making sure the exact content expressed in community guidelines is clear will not be enough. Striving for clarity is not something to be achieved once and for all. Instead, it is a continuing process that demands attention and effort (Mirick, 2016).

Although creativity is not an exclusively individual or internal process, individuals and the cognitive part of individuals' thinking processes are still closely involved in the creative process. In this case, meeting the demands incorporated in the community guidelines while being able to create and publish the content one prefers can be considered as solving a problem for the individual. Improving clarity of request could facilitate the individual's problem-solving process by helping the individual break a problem into smaller sub-problems and solve each of those in turn, which might lead ultimately to solution of the overall problem (Weisberg, 2006). In this way, through positively interacting with the clear and specific rules, the individual could produce a wide range of new ideas that both live up to the expectations of the community and match his or her personal goals, making the online community more creative in a bigger picture.

5.0   CONCLUSION

Censorship is essential for building a safe, civilized, and polite online community, as many online communities are increasingly being used to promote problematic, offensive, and inappropriate messages or ideas such as violence, racism, terrorism, and child pornography (Gerrard, 2018). As an explicit and formal form of censorship, community guidelines establish formal rules of conduct that reflect behavioral norms and expectations within an online community and require users to behave in advocated ways, which may be enforced by moderators ("Community Guidelines," 2016). Community guidelines clarify what is allowed and what is not allowed in community activities. Although community guidelines are important for an online community, questions arise about whether such rules might stifle community creativity or lead to fewer creative ideas or projects within the community. Concerns persist about whether the use of censorship sacrifices community creativity in favor of maintaining a safe and polite online environment. To address these concerns, it is imperative to identify strategies that effectively promote community creativity while maintaining the regulatory presence of censorship.

The goal of this paper is to answer the questions listed above. To put it differently, this paper hopes to promote the creativity of an online community by improving the design of community guidelines, which are a form of censorship. Specific communication strategies to reach that goal will be discussed by taking into consideration of community guidelines, censorship, psychological reactance, participatory creativity and persuasive communication. First of all, we have to define and understand the nature of community guidelines, which is censorship, to see whether or not community guidelines are fundamentally destructive for creativity. Once we have clarified the essence of censorship, we then can move on to explaining how psychological reactance elicited by censorship could hinder creativity, meaning that although censorship itself is not hurting creativity, the individual's response to censorship can block the creative process. Although community guidelines are essential for the healthy and meaningful development of any online community, the audience or users may not feel or think this way due to the existence of psychological reactance.

They may experience lots of negative emotions, form negative evaluations of advocated behaviors and whoever made the rules or even act the opposite of what is expected. Psychological reactance could hinder creativity because creativity always occurs in a sociocultural context with the active participation from individuals, according to participatory creativity theory. By considering all the aspects mentioned before and drawing inspiration from persuasive communication, five specific communication strategies can be formulated to help an online community become more creative while staying safe and polite through the way censorship is communicated. Those communication strategies are listed as follows: (1) reduce the use of high-controlling language; (2) add restoration postscripts; (3) increase message novelty; (4) include narrative; (5) improve clarity of request.

Without knowing the rules of a domain, individual cannot form creative ideas or participate in the creative process, let alone build a creative online community because creativity is inherently socio-cultural (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999). The first two strategies encourage the audience to accept attempted social influence, to get to know the rules of a domain set by a field and to participate in relevant online activities with community guidelines in mind, which in the end would facilitate the creativity of a community since there are so many active and positive interactions between the individual, the field and the domain (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; Brehm & Brehm, 1981). The third communication strategy will be supporting the creativity of an online community by acknowledging the individual agency throughout the creative process that is about capitalizing on the best that each user has to bring to the process (Clapp, 2016). The fourth strategy can help smooth out social tensions between users and policy-makers in order to reach a mutual understanding and agreement and to continue the creative process (Clapp, 2016). The last strategy highlights the individual's cognitive efforts in the creative process, which in this case can be related to problem-solving (Weisberg, 2006).

Such suggestions can be helpful for the people or departments that are in charge of designing community guidelines of an online platform which heavily relies on user-generated content if the platform wants to increase the audience's acceptance of community guidelines and intends to further promote the creativity of its online community. But there are some limitations attached to the five proposed strategies: lack of direct and primary evidence proving the effectiveness of the communication strategies in the online community context; lack of differentiation between platforms with different functions; failing to take into account specific kinds of cultures and societies. Therefore, more research needs to be done in the future to address these problems so that we can better validate the effectiveness of the strategies and make the strategies more effective in general or in more contextualized settings. For example, we can use the consensual assessment technique to design research, where we invite expert judges to rate the creativity of different products that are created by following the community guidelines that have applied the five strategies or by following the ones that do not utilize such strategies (Kaufman, Baer, & Cole, 2009). We can also use such tool to design research to compare the creativity located in platforms with different functions as well as different cultures and societies while using the five strategies without differentiation and customization. In addition, to make community guidelines more supportive of creativity development through the lens of psychological reactance, we should consider other directions as well, including the scope of guideline violation and the credibility or reputation of the source that is introducing community guidelines such as a particular tech company (Brehm & Brehm, 1981; Pavey & Sparks, 2009).

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