

The Evolution of Mobile Journalism (MOJO): Challenges and Opportunities

Riya Agrawal

Student, Dept. of Journalism and Mass Communication, Invertis University, Bareilly (U.P.)

Dr. Lalit Kumar

Assistant Prof. & Head, Dept. of Journalism and Mass Communication

Invertis University, Bareilly (U.P.)

E-mail: medialalit@gmail.com

Abstract

Mobile journalism, or using phones to consume or create news, has become a significant change in how news is made and shared today in all around the world especially in India. This paper closely examines this development across the country. Using phones for news has created some great opportunities, like getting news out very quickly and reaching more people, it showcases the side of news which might be kept hidden by the other side, which increase diversity and transparency. It can also be more affordable for news organizations as well as the people

However, there are also some difficulties that come with it. Which includes unethical content, fake information, and misuse of journalism power, raise question on trust, timeliness, and quality of content is must. For example, how citizenship journalism leading to the new era of journalism, mobile journalism breaks the ethics of journalism, AI has also raise the marks on risk, excessive information misleading the people, ensuring good quality news when using phone cameras and microphones can be challenging. Journalists also need to learn new skills to work effectively with mobile devices. Additionally, there are important questions about what is right and wrong when reporting news so rapidly.

This study will look at how mobile journalism has grown in India over time. It will also consider the good things it offers, like potentially giving more diverse voices a platform and helping people engage with news in new ways. At the same time, the paper will carefully examine the problems that journalists and news companies in India face when they use phones for news. This includes issues like technological limitations, the need for proper training, and dealing with varying internet connectivity.

Keywords: Mobile Journalism, Digital News, Journalism Ethics, Misinformation, Media Transparency, News Consumption

Introduction

Mobile journalism means news can travel very quickly and reach lots of different people. For me, this is a big chance to use news, especially on phones, to share the stories of women and make sure their voices are strong and clear. It feels like we can talk directly to people and maybe even show parts of stories that you don't usually see in the regular news but there are also some tricky things about getting news through phones. It's really important to make sure the news is real and honest, and that people are using this power in the right way.

We need to think about how to tell good stories on phones and make sure we're not spreading fake information or hurting people's privacy. It also means that reporters need to learn new ways of working with phones because everyone can easily share things on their phones, regular people are becoming a bit like reporters too, which is called citizen journalism. This can bring new and different views and show us what's happening right where people are. But it also makes it harder to know if the information is correct and not biased. So, understanding how mobile journalism works with these citizen reporters, and how we can make sure what they share is trustworthy, is a big part of what I want to learn. Also, I want to look at how making news with phones affects money, both for big news companies and for reporters who work on their own. It's easier to start making news with a phone, which can bring new ideas and ways of doing things, but we also need to think about how to keep things professional and not making it with the purpose of business.

Overall, this research wants to give a good understanding of how mobile journalism is changing the news in India. By looking at how it started, what good things and bad things are happening now, and thinking about what's right and wrong, I hope to share some useful ideas for reporters, news companies, and everyone who wants to know more about how we get our news today and in the future.

History

Mobile Journalism has transformed the way news is produced and consumed. Beginning in the 1990s, this innovative approach has evolved significantly over the years.

1913: The Leica Camera. While not digital, the introduction of the portable 35mm Leica camera marked a significant shift, allowing photojournalists to move freely and capture news as it happened outside of studios. This can be seen as an early precursor to the mobility central to mojo.

1953: The "Walkie-Lookie". RCA's first portable black and white television camera enabled reporters to capture live events outside the studio, bringing a new level of immediacy to broadcast news.

Early Days (1990-2000): The first mobile journalism project was launched in Finland in 1994. By 1997, CNN was broadcasting news, using mobile phones, marking a significant milestone. This period laid the groundwork for mobile journalism's growth.

Growth (2000-2010): The invention of camera phones in 2002 revolutionized mobile journalism, enabling journalists to capture and share images instantly. The launch of the iPhone in 2007 further accelerated mobile journalism's adoption, providing a powerful tool for news production.

Early 2010s: Citizen Journalism and Social Media. Events like the Arab Spring demonstrated the power of citizens using their smartphones to capture and disseminate crucial news and information in real-time, often bypassing traditional media. The rise of social media platforms provided immediate distribution channels.

Mid-2010s: Development of Mobile Journalism Apps and Training. Dedicated applications for video and audio editing, live streaming, and newsgathering optimized for mobile devices became available. Formal training programs and resources for mobile journalists began to emerge within news organizations and journalism schools.

Present Day (now): Today, mobile journalism is an integral part of the media landscape. Journalists use mobile devices to capture video, photos, and text, and share them instantly on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Mobile journalism has also enabled citizen journalism, allowing ordinary people to report news and share their perspectives and this has become easy to reach millions in seconds but this also has created a lot of negative perspective towards mobile journalism. The rise and widespread adoption of social media platforms, such as Twitter (founded 2006, gained significant traction in the late 2000s and early 2010s), Facebook (founded 2004, became a dominant platform in the early 2010s), Instagram (founded 2010), YouTube (founded 2005), and more recently TikTok (founded 2016 internationally), have fundamentally altered the dissemination and consumption of news produced via mobile journalism. These platforms provide direct channels for journalists to distribute content, engage with audiences in real time, and leverage user-generated content for reporting (with due verification and attribution). The emphasis on visual and immediate content on these platforms has further amplified the relevance and adoption of mobile journalism practices.

Media Shift towards Mobile Journalism

1. NDTV (launched mobile app in 2010)
2. Times of India (introduced mobile news in 2005)
3. BBC Hindi (started mobile news service in 2012)
4. India Today (launched mobile app in 2011)

Research Objective:

- ☐ To examine the historical development of mobile journalism (MOJO)
- ☐ To analyse the current practices and tools used in mobile journalism
- ☐ To identify the main challenges faced by mobile journalists
- ☐ To assess the opportunities mobile journalism presents for the media industry
- ☐ To evaluate the impact of mobile journalism on traditional news organizations

Review of Literature

Mahon, James (2021), research delves into the transformative impact of mobile journalism (Mojo) on the news industry, positioning it as both a reactive adaptation to and a proactive solution within the evolving digital landscape. The study underscores that technological advancements are the primary drivers of this shift, compelling journalists to acquire new skillsets to remain relevant. While the adoption of Mojo presents notable advantages, such as the facilitation of live broadcasting and significant cost reductions for news organizations, it also introduces substantial challenges. These include the displacement of traditional journalistic roles and an intensification of workload for those remaining in newsrooms. Furthermore, Quinn highlights the significant influence of prevailing social trends in a smartphone-centric society, coupled with the pervasive power of major technology corporations, in shaping the trajectory of mobile journalism. A key concern raised is the increasing reliance on user-generated content, which, while offering immediacy and accessibility, carries the potential to erode core journalistic principles of balance and objectivity.

Newman (2020), the comprehensive analysis examines the multifaceted transformations occurring within the digital news ecosystem. Their findings reveal a paradoxical situation: while digital platforms have expanded access to news and information for a larger population, this has not necessarily translated into deeper engagement with journalistic content. The study emphasizes the significant pressures faced by traditional news outlets as they navigate a media environment

increasingly dominated by major technology platforms that control distribution and capture a substantial share of audience attention and advertising revenue. Identifying key underlying trends, the authors point to the ongoing shift towards digital and mobile consumption, the growing influence of these tech giants, and the emergence of a high-choice media environment where users often prioritize entertainment and social interaction over news. This evolving landscape poses a risk to media pluralism, potentially leading to a decline in diverse, professionally produced journalism. Consequently, the report stresses the critical role of policymakers in developing and implementing strategies that can effectively support the production of quality journalism and establish a sustainable and balanced media environment that serves the public interest.

Aleksić, D. (2021), in this research addresses new digital media age, characterized by new features such as convergence, mobility and interactivity, mobile journalism emerged as a new journalistic form-challenging relation between creators and recipients of media content. Even though the idea of user-generated media content that can be instantly shared and broadcasted using small mobile devices sounds like a multi-beneficial concept, this model still faces many challenges. In practice, numerous questions have arisen, such as ethics, reliability and quality of such content as well as acceptance and implementation into professional newsrooms. Therefore, the aim of this article is to review an academic approach to this topic, backed by practical examples, in order to place mobile journalism into a complex modern media system and evaluate its potential in the context of future development.

Yulvitz Ramón Quiroz Pacheco (2024), the authors define mobile journalism (MOJO) as a specialized form of journalism centered on the creation of multimedia content and the development of new narrative forms through the use of smartphones. The findings indicate a significant shift in audience consumption patterns, with a growing preference for the innovative storytelling facilitated by mobile platforms. While acknowledging the empowering versatility of smartphones for journalists, the study also raises concerns about the potential for professionals to become overstretched by the need to handle multiple roles simultaneously. The research concludes that mobile journalism is not merely a fleeting trend but a fundamental

Aditi Agarwal and Ishita Agarwal (2023), research abstract highlights the significant and rapid evolution of mobile journalism, defined as the use of mobile devices like smartphones and tablets for news production and dissemination. The study traces its origins back to the emergence of the

internet in the 1990s, with tangible developments beginning in the early 2000s as mobile phones incorporated basic cameras and text messaging. Furthermore, mobile journalism is recognized for its role in democratizing news gathering, empowering individuals to share their stories. However, the abstract also acknowledges challenges such as variable content quality and the risks associated with fake news and disinformation on social media. Despite these challenges, the research positions the evolution of mobile journalism as a significant and transformative development, offering new avenues for audience engagement, impactful storytelling, and pushing the boundaries of news reporting.

Research Methodology

This research employed a mixed-methods approach to investigate public perception regarding the evolution of mobile journalism, its challenges, and opportunities, particularly in the context of four significant news events in India. The study combined qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis techniques to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research questions.

Case Study Selection

Four distinct case studies were selected based on their significant impact on Indian society and politics, as well as their relevance to the role and perception of mobile journalism:

- Pulwama Terrorist Attack (2019)
- COVID-19 Pandemic in India (2020)
- Mumbai Terrorist Attack (2008)
- Hathras Rape Case (2020)

These cases were analyzed by exploring publicly available information from online news articles, social media posts, and online forums to understand the narratives and discussions surrounding these events in relation to mobile journalism.

Data Collection Methods

This study employed both secondary and primary data collection methods:

Secondary Data Collection

1. Examination of news articles, social media posts, and online forums related to each of the four case studies to understand the prevalent narratives and the role of mobile journalism in their coverage and public discussion.

- Collection of data from reputable news websites, government reports, and social media platforms relevant to the case studies and the broader evolution of mobile journalism.

Primary Data Collection

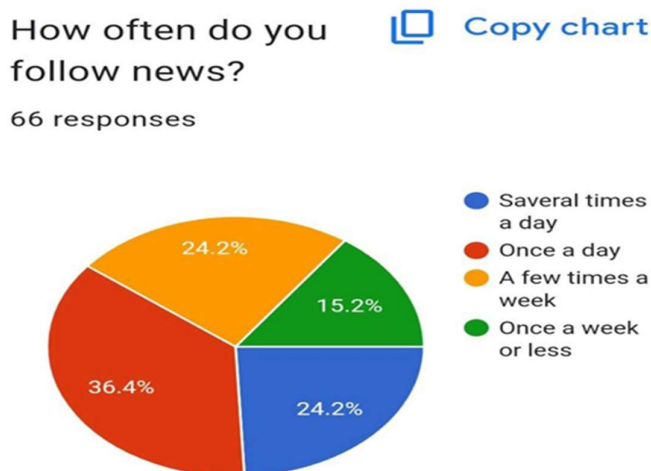
- Informal Group Discussions with Friends:** Informal group discussions were conducted with 9-10 friends to gain preliminary insights into their perceptions of news consumption and mobile journalism. These discussions were open-ended and touched upon themes related to trust, transparency, and the impact of mobile journalism.
- Questionnaire Survey:** The questionnaire has been filled by **66 respondents** through an online survey.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data collected through these methods was analysed using both qualitative and quantitative techniques:

- Quantitative Data Analysis:** The data from the questionnaires collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics (percentages) to summarize public opinion regarding news consumption and perceptions of mobile journalism.
- Qualitative Data Analysis:** The data from the initial group discussions with friends and semi-structured interviews with family members was analyzed thematically to identify key themes, patterns, and insights into their experiences and perspectives on mobile journalism. These insights also informed the interpretation of the questionnaire data.

1. How often do you use consume the news?

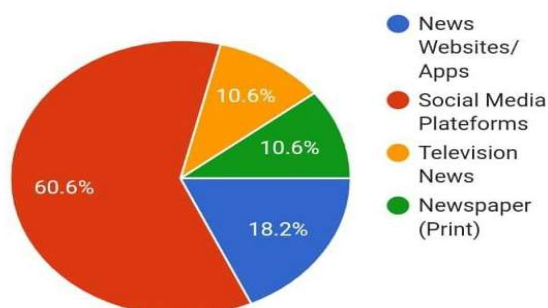


Interpretation: 36.4% of respondents consume news several times a day, while 24.2% & 24.2% of respondents consume it once a day, and a few times a week. This suggests that most respondents are highly engaged with news consumption, potentially indicating a strong interest in current events was stored securely.

2. What are your primary sources of news consumption?

What are your primary sources for news consumption?
66 responses

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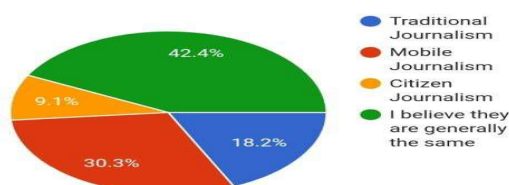


Interpretation: 60.6% of respondents are primary sources of News Websites/Apps. This indicates a strong preference for digital news sources over traditional ones like print newspapers or television.

3. According to you, which form of journalism has more transparency and authenticity?

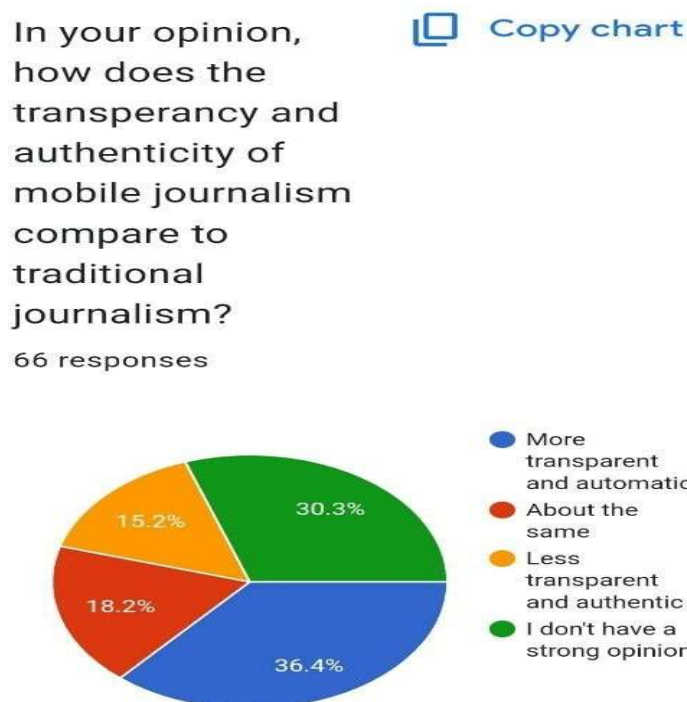
According to you, which form of journalism has more transparency and authenticity?
66 responses

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Interpretation: 42.3% of respondents believed they are generally the same. While 30.3% of respondents Mobile Journalism is more powerful medium for transparency, and authenticity. 18.2% chose Traditional Journalism, and 9.1% chose citizen journalism. This indicates a slight preference for Mobile Journalism in terms of transparency and authenticity.

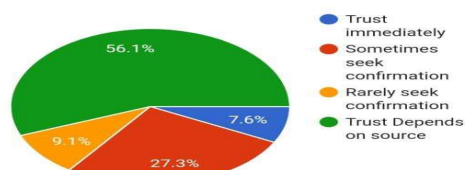
4. In your opinion, how does the transparency and authenticity of mobile journalism compare to traditional forms of journalism?



Interpretation: 36.4% of respondents believed Mobile Journalism is more transparent/authentic, while 30.3% of respondents' do not have a strong opinion about this. This indicates a slight majority perceive Mobile Journalism as more transparent/authentic than Traditional Journalism.

5. Do you automatically trust news heard on digital media platforms, or do you seek confirmation from traditional media like newspapers or television?

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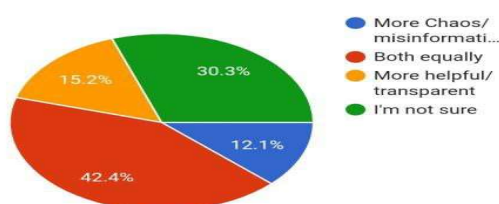
Interpretation: 56.1% of respondents trust depends on main media platform source, while 27.3% respondents sometimes seek confirmation. This indicates a cautious approach to trusting digital media news.

6. Is citizen journalism creating chaos or spreading misinformation, or is it helpful and enhancing transparency?

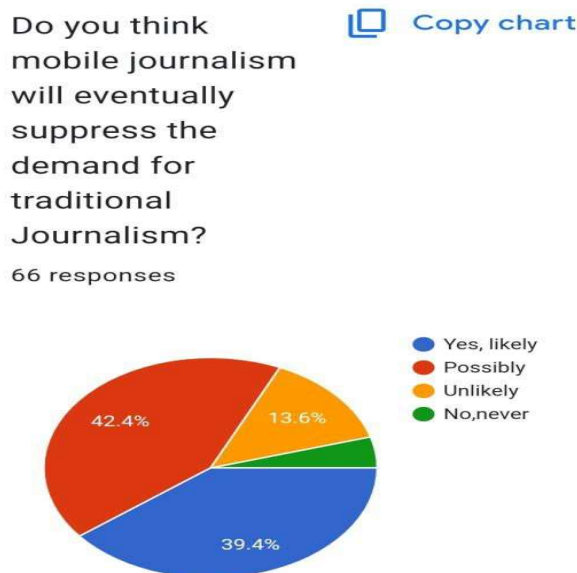
Interpretation: 42.4% of respondents both equally believed that citizen journalism is helpful/enhancing transparency, while 30.3% of respondents says that they are not sure. This indicates a majority perceive citizen journalism as beneficial.

Is citizen journalism creating chaos or spreading misinformation, or is it helpful and enhancing transparency?
66 responses

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7. Do you think mobile journalism will eventually suppress the demand for traditional journalism?



Interpretation: 42.4% of respondents believed possibly, 39.4% thought yes likely, and 13.6% believed unlikely, while 4.6% of respondents say never. This indicates a significant portion expect mobile journalism to impact traditional journalism demand.

Research Findings

The comprehensive analysis of the questionnaire reveals profound insights into the evolving landscape of journalism, particularly the rise of mobile journalism and its impact on traditional journalism, citizen journalism, and societal perceptions.

1. A significant 36.4% of respondents consume news multiple times a day, demonstrating a high level of engagement with current events.
2. An additional 24.2% each consume news once a day and a few times a week, respectively.
3. A substantial 60.6% of respondents indicated that their primary source of news is digital platforms such as news websites or apps.

4. When asked to compare different forms of journalism, 42.3% of respondents believe all forms of journalism are generally the same in terms of impact. However, 30.3% considered Mobile Journalism to be a more powerful medium for promoting transparency and authenticity, compared to 18.2% who favoured Traditional Journalism and 9.1% who chose Citizen Journalism.
5. 36.4% of respondents agreed that Mobile Journalism offers greater transparency and authenticity, while 30.3% were neutral or uncertain.
6. A majority (56.1%) reported that their trust in news depends heavily on the credibility of the main media platform, indicating a discerning attitude toward digital news consumption.
7. Meanwhile, 27.3% of respondents stated that they sometimes seek verification of the news, further indicating a cautious and evaluative approach among consumers.
8. 42.4% of respondents believed that Citizen Journalism contributes positively to transparency, while another 30.3% remained unsure about its impact.
9. When asked about the future impact of mobile journalism on traditional journalism, 42.4% said it is possibly influential, and 39.4% agreed it is likely to impact. Only 13.6% believed it was unlikely, and 4.6% thought it would never have an impact.

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