

RESEARCH PROPOSAL
SMARTPHONES AS TOOL FOR NEWS GATHERING AMONG JOURNALISTS IN
OYO STATE

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background of the Stud

Electronic news-gathering in journalism refers to the use of electronic video and audio technology by reporters and editors to gather and display news. The scope of ENG can range from a lone reporter using a single professional video camera to a whole television crew driving a truck on location. However, the most recent ENG is the smartphone (Allan, 2006). Meanwhile, effort will be dwelled extensively on smartphone.

New technological development in the society has always witnessed accompanied change in the various systems and institutions of the society including mass media environment. This is ultimately unavoidable so as to maintain relevance and credence in the increasingly growing society we find ourselves (Nwafor, 2010).

Also, Nwafor (2010) is of the opinion that media as an institution of the society has always incorporated its growth and development in the advancement recorded in the various medium and channels which it leverages on. He emphasized that generally speaking, communication have always leveraged on the most effective medium available to transmit messages and information; either intrapersonal, interpersonal, group or mass.

Olley (2009) buttressed, that consistent metamorphosis and revolution have in lieu of this, happened to communication in the changing scope of information and communication technology (ICT), of which smartphone is not exempted. Communication especially mass, is now solely if not entirely relying on technology to not only survive but thrive in this changing times,

Edeh (2014) added that the role of the ICT, especially smartphones and internet cannot be overemphasized, as they serve pivotal function in changing and altering the practice of

journalism in the world. It has of course given a level of professional touch to journalism, but also given room to amateur and citizen journalism. Journalism in this clime now requires little or no certification even in some media organizations.

Similarly, the revelation of the great academic prophet, Marshal McLuhan on ICT taking over and revolutionizing the world was subsumed in the coined phrase ‘global village’. This phrase as explicated reveals the certainty of the electronic communication uniting the world and turning it into one small village (Oketunmbi, 2005). Sequel to this, the advent of smartphones has done a better job of fulfilling McLuhan’s prophesy, as it is no more just a globalized village but having the world in the palm of a hand per time i.e. control of the communication medium in our hands (Kobackova, 2015).

In line with the fast growth of technology, smartphone came as one of the electronic telecommunication device which allows for long distance communication (Alfred & Atkin, 2020). Smartphone can be referred to as a minicomputer, with features and functions as computer in the handy form (Rambitan, 2015). Smartphone as having the ability of a computer coupled with the conventional functions of the mobile phone, adding that Smartphone is a mobile phone that has the ability of a computer, and provides users with advance communication and computing ability than the traditional mobile phone equipped with internet access, camera with high quality, and management tools. Latest smartphones are viewed as handheld computers rather than a normal phone because of its powerful computing ability and large memory (Singh & Samah, 2018).

The capacity of running feature-rich application (apps) on smartphones made smartphone a more powerful device replacing many devices such as alarms clocks, calculators, laptops, GPS navigators and digital cameras. The mobile handset has rapidly moved beyond voice telephony or

even simple text-based communication which it started on into more complex multi-platform delivery systems; some of the latest models are portable digital media production and data transfer systems with configurations of features such as still and video camera capabilities, multimedia file swapping, global positioning satellite receivers, music players, access to radio and television content, email and Web browsers, databases, address books, calendars, clocks, games and many other downloadable and upgradeable software applications (Cameron, 2006).

To date, much of the professional practice of Mobile Journalism (MoJo) appears to have originated within print-based newsrooms that are experimenting with adding multimedia elements to their Web-based publications (Cameron, 2007). MoJo are generally seen as being able to respond quickly to breaking news events, often operating away from the newsroom environment for extended periods of time.

Talabi (2011) posited that the smartphone with internet on its leverage, has its own revolutionised effect on journalism, which do not only implicate the practice of journalists but also that of the information/news consumption practice of the audience as well.

Garyantes and Berkey-Gerard (2015) as well posited that mobile devices such as smartphones and media tablets brings significant technical innovations to the news industry, as users are offered the ability to produce as much as they consume. Hence, the use of new digital tools to garner better access and connection to the audience, is the main focus and attention of the new technologically upgraded media, making sure that communication is more meaningful interaction.

Social media particularly Twitter which made possible by smartphone has made it easy to follow celebrities and politicians that break into news very often like Lai Muhammed, Boss Mustapher, Ayodele Fayose, Fai Fani-Kayode, Babatunde Fashola, Fami Adeshina, Garba Sheu

and so on. Journalists equally use Twitter and other social media to source news, images and so on. It is against this backdrop that the research investigates smartphones as tool for news gathering among journalists in Oyo State.

Statement of the Problem

It is no small responsibility saddled on the media to keep people abreast of the happening around them. This has necessitated the need for help of technological tools like smartphones to ease the work of reporter and improve their efficiency from the slow pace and often times cumbersome process of gathering and disseminating news with limited audience reach. ICT has brought a number of improvement to journalism as it is doesn't have to endure the analogue system, where it takes longer time and duration for reporters to gather information and package reports, and often not making deadlines (Kwanya, 2014).

Studies on smartphone and its influence have mostly been focused on the society (Osazee-odia, 2016), or students in higher institutions of learning (Singh & Samah, 2018; Adelabu, Sanusi & Esiri, 2015), little has been done to consider how journalists feel about the usage of smartphone at work, how efficient/distracting it is, as well as the overall perceive impact it has on their working activities, which this study give serious consideration and attention to. It is against this background that the study investigates smartphones as tool for news gathering among journalists in Oyo State.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to look at smartphones as tool for news gathering among journalists in Oyo State while the specific objectives are:

- i. To find out the level of smartphone usage among journalists in Oyo State for news gathering.
- ii. To determine the attitude of journalists in Oyo State towards the use of smartphone as tool for news gathering.
- iii. To examine the perceived ease of use of smartphone for newsgathering among journalists in Oyo State.
- iv. To investigate the perceived usefulness of smartphone to journalists in Oyo State for newsgathering.
- v. To determine the impact of smartphone as newsgathering tool among journalists in Oyo State.

Research Questions

In order to explicate the aforementioned objectives, the listed questions provide answers to the research problem:

- i. To what extent are journalists in Oyo State use smartphone for news gathering?
- ii. What is the attitude of journalists in Oyo State to the use of smartphone as tool for news gathering?
- iii. What is the level of the perceived usefulness of smartphones as tool for newsgathering among journalists in Oyo State?
- iv. What is the level of perceived ease of use of smartphone for newsgathering among journalists in Oyo State?

- v. What is the perceived impact of smartphone as newsgathering tool among journalists in Oyo State?

Significance of the Study

This study is intended at finding out the level of adoption and usage of the various function and beneficiary accessories on the smartphones by the journalists in Oyo state, in the course of performing their duties as journalists, hence draws inference on the impact of smartphones on journalists. Therefore, it is important to journalist to rate and measure the level of their usage and adoption of smartphone in the course of their work.

This study is also essential to serve stakeholders in the media with the needed insight and encouragement as to the vast opportunities and efficiency that can be achieve in the course of adopting the usage of smartphones by journalists, taking a focus to motivation as well as education on the optimal use of it.

Scope of the Study

This study which investigates smartphones as tool for news gathering among journalists in Oyo State was streamlined to journalists in Oyo State. Specifically, the registered journalists as held in the record of National Union of Journalists, Oyo State chapter shall be covered in the scope of the study. In terms of membership and active registration with the NUJ Oyo State chapter. The unregistered journalists will be excluded as no record of them. The geographical scope of this study is within Oyo State.

Operational Definition of Terms

Smartphone: This is a handheld device, capable of providing wireless voice communication along with support for other applications, which is made use of by the journalists in smartphones in the processes involving in activities of news gathering and reporting.

News gathering: This is the totality of the processes and activities involved in news gathering and reporting as carried out by journalist in smartphones.

Journalists: these are the trained and certified personnel who gather and report news/information for an acclaimed media establishment in Bayelsa State and are equally registered and certified by the NUJ Oyo State chapter.

CHAPTER TWO: Theoretical Framework

Although, there are lots of theories suitable for this research, however, this theory will be used for this study. Technological Acceptance Model (TAM) and Technological Determinism Theory (TDT) will be extensively discussed later in the chapter two of this study under theoretical framework.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this part is to establish the broad methodological engagement of this study which is relevant for describing the strategies involved in research. Therefore, this chapter clearly states research design, research method, population of study, sample size, sample technique/procedure, instrument for data collection, validity and reliability of the instrument, method and instrument for data analysis and presentation.

Research Design

According to Voxco (nd), research design refers to the framework of market research methods and techniques that are chosen by a researcher. The design that is chosen by the researchers allow them to utilise the methods that are suitable for the study and to set up their studies successfully in the future as well. The design of research can be qualitative, quantitative, or mixed. Adding that under these research designs, researchers can choose between different types of research methods; experimental studies, surveys, correlational studies, or quasi-experimental review studies

Questionpro (nd), equally pointed out that research design is the framework of research methods and techniques chosen by a researcher. The design allows researchers to hone in on research methods that are suitable for the subject matter and set up their studies up for success.

Research Method

This study is aimed at examining the smartphones as tool for news gathering among journalists in Oyo State. A survey research method shall be adopted to enable researcher draw inference on variables under study. A survey method is a process, tool, or technique that you can use to gather information in research by asking questions to a predefined group of people. Typically, it facilitates the exchange of information between the research participants and the person or organization carrying out the research (Formplus Blog, 2022). In the of OER Services (nd), a survey research a research method involving the use of standardized questionnaires or interviews to collect data about people and their preferences, thoughts, and behaviors in a systematic manner.

Population of Study

The population of the study includes journalists/reporters working at the various media outlets across Oyo State. In accordance with the records available from the Nigeria Union of Journalists, Oyo State chapter, there is an estimation of 148 registered journalists in Oyo State. These journalists serve as the population of this study.

Sample Size

Owing to the limited number of the research population which is 148 registered journalists, the entire population will be adopted for the study. Journalists in Oyo State will be studied as any other journalist in any state of Nigeria could have been studied. Journalists in Oyo State share similarities with journalists across the federation in the optimization and utilization of smartphones for news gathering.

Sample Procedure

According to OECD (2004), a sampling technique is the name or other identification of the specific process by which the entities of the sample have been selected. In the view of Seema (2018), sampling helps a lot in research. It is one of the most important factors which determines the accuracy of your research/survey result. If anything goes wrong with your sample then it will be directly reflected in the final result.

The researcher will thus employ a census sampling technique in selecting the sample. The population of registered journalists as earlier pointed out is not one which cannot be covered in the research scope. Therefore, census sampling technique will be employed to ensure the whole population is adopted as sample for the study.

Instrument for Data Collection

For the purpose of this study, a self-administered questionnaire will be used to collect data from the sample of this study. The questionnaire will contain 2 sections in line with the objectives of the study. Section A will contain data relating to demography of the respondents, section B has to do with relating to the research questions.

Validity and Reliability of Research Instrument

Hence the face validity of this instrument was ensured by the supervisor, who will through the process of vetting the ambiguity and structural make-up of the instrument, validate the use of the research instrument.

The pilot study will also be conducted using journalists of Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), who also make use of smartphones in carrying out news gathering and reporting. The unregistered journalists will be excluded from the study while only the registered ones will form

the population base for this study. The pilot study will take place from 23rd to 24th of November, 2022.

The pilot study is meant to ascertain the clarity of the questions and detect problems in the questionnaire instructions, as well as find out whether the respondents have any difficulty understanding the questionnaire or whether there are any ambiguous questions. The exercise will help the researcher to make necessary amendments and modifications in the questionnaire before final distribution.

Data Collection Procedure

The data will be collected for this study from the 7th to 8th of December through personal distribution of questionnaire by the researcher.

Method of Data Analysis

Data can be analyzed in qualitative and quantitative methods. Therefore, this study will adopt quantitative method in analyzing and presenting the data to be gathered. Therefore, to properly explain and explore the variety of data to be collected, the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software package version 23 will be used and descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) will be used with the aid of tables.

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