

The Impact of Mobile Journalism on the Traditional Media

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Abstract: *Journalism is the profession which involves a person to stay on their toes for quickly and precisely accumulate, produce and broadcast the daily scoop of the world or the country. It is a stream which is very receptive towards technological developments. So, in the recent years a New wave of journalism has come to existence which is accounting to the needs of unfiltered, right-on-spot coverage of news and also meeting the comfort of the consumers regarding its accessibility through the new media, it's called Mobile Journalism (MoJo). Mobile Journalism is the type of journalism in which a smartphone plays the primary role and act as catalyst for the entire process of journalism. A mobile phone becomes a pocket-friendly studio for reporters in which they may record, edit and publish their respective content. The objective of this research study is to analyze the impact of MoJo on traditional media and to search for its role in the future line of actions. The Hypothesis of the paper is that MoJo has positive impact on the Media industry in many ways and it has increased the efficiency of news reporting.*

Keywords: Mobile Journalism, Efficiency, Impact, Traditional Media, Catalyst

1. Introduction

Journalism has always been an adapting profession. It has always been a stream which has progressed with technological succession. From newspaper to radio, radio to television to all the way adapting new media, journalism is giving its best effort to make it more efficient and viewers friendly. In this link mobile journalism is emerging all over the world. Now-a-days everyone wants to get the news as quickly as possible. The need of urgency has moved journalism to adopt this more quick and mobile type of journalism. Today 2.5 billion of world's population is using smart phones and its users are still increasing.⁽¹⁾ It clearly means that like new media, Mobile journalism also has an ever emerging market to serve. Many news channels all over the world are understanding the importance of MoJo (mobile journalism) in the future and that's why they are encouraging their reporter to use smart phones while covering a story. The mobile handset has rapidly moved beyond voice telephony or even simple text-based communication 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.² But with positive side there is also some scope of improvement in MoJo, which is very important to be understood by the stakeholders.

Citizen journalism and MoJo

Citizen journalism is the dissemination of information by people who are not professional journalists.³ Citizen do not practice this kind of journalism because it is their job, they do it because they want improvement in the society. Citizen journalism and Mobile journalism are closely related to each other. Mobile phone is the most powerful tool for citizen journalism. They do not have heavy equipment like film camera for capturing videos, costly DSLR camera for

clicking pictures, etc. Everybody having a cell phone in their pockets has made it possible to have more angles, more cameras and more perspectives. That means it really takes people closer to the truth, closer to what's actually happening. With the improvement of communication technologies and introduction of the concept of mobile journalism, people reach to a wider audience has been increased multiple times. There are many social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp, YouTube, etc. that has provided powerful means to people to spread information of events happening in the society. Mobile journalism has not just restricted to clicking photos and video and share it on internet, also includes editing of content and convert it into a news story. Even in the case of Osama Bin Laden assassination it was not any media channel which telecast that news, it was a local citizen that makes it known to the people through internet even before the former US President Barak Obama's official announcement.⁴ YouTube solely has been proven to be a most popular platform of many content creators. YouTube has not only proven beneficial for entertainment purpose but for also for spreading information and creating awareness. The recent example of this can be the sting operation of many celebrities by a YouTube channel named "CobraPost". Recently CobraPost uploaded many videos of stings on its YouTube channel on 19th February, 2019. It exposes many celebrities of film industries who were ready to post contents on their social media handlers that favour particular political parties for coming election in exchange of money. But this news was not shown on any news channel or newspaper but able to reach people through internet. So clearly it is been shown the even T.V., which is considered as more fast way of mass communication hesitate to put its hand on this matter but mobile phone and internet open it all. This kind of journalism is quite fearless and mostly unbiased as it is not owned by private parties and not dependent on advertisements for earnings and survival so it can fearlessly publish those contents also which main stream media hesitates to publish. As far as we talk about the audience so the matter of fact is that about 2.5 billion people in the world use Smartphone in the world and if talk about India so it is about 40%.⁵ And people with internet access are about 3.3

Volume 8 Issue 12, December 2019

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billion of total population of the world.⁶ So it is clearly visible that mobile journalism and news stories through new media have a very large audience to serve. Mobile journalism has strengthened the democracy in term of expressing thoughts to people in most effective and fearless way.

Impact on traditional journalism

The profession of journalism is serving the society from a very long period and it had undergone many revolutionary changes time to time. Traditional media which includes T.V., newspaper, radio, etc. had played their roles effectively for many years. But the scenario is changing. Both media houses and viewers are demanding changes according to their needs. Viewers want news and information as quick and easy as possible and media houses also want to produce news content as economical as possible. Mobile journalism is playing a key factor in both cases. It had improved both effectiveness (timeliness) and efficiency (cost) of news contents. There are many benefits that mobile is providing to the traditional media. Mobile Journalists can go unnoticed thanks to their small equipment. Smartphones are not perceived as press cameras so you will be able to shoot stories in places where standard video journalists would never dare to go. For example reporting from Syria is a very risky task. An Al Jazeera journalist who was forced to remain anonymous for security reasons shot with his smartphone an unusual but compelling first-person documentary of a country in turmoil and a revolution in progress.⁷ He was able to film unobtrusively and get into the places that would have been impossible with big film cameras. Not just convenience it also offer the reporter to get more personalize talk with the people. People are less intimidated when being interviewed with a phone than with a big camera, like in case of a rape victim. It is much more discreet, less intrusive and more familiar, so people just tend to be far more sincere and more open as a result. Break barriers between your audience and the story by going mobile. Mobile Journalism can help you or your organization save costs. Not only at the moment of buying new equipment, but also when training personnel or maintaining your gear. One of the reasons why mobile journalism is growing so fast is thanks to its impact on the bottom line for freelance journalist, medium production companies or large broadcasting corporations. A brilliant example of this can be of Falkland Islands Television. Born in 2011 with a tight budget, the small national broadcast media, Falkland Islands Television, bets on Mobile equipment to allow reporters produce more efficient and fast content both for TV and social media.⁸ So the question here arises whether the traditional journalism is ending with the emergence of mobile journalism? Answer is that traditional journalism is not yet dead. It may be a while since you picked up a newspaper, watched a live TV broadcast or had to tune a radio. We access media differently now, on demand, on our phones. But that does not mean we do not need journalists. In fact in these days of fake news we need traditional journalism more than ever. We need sources we can trust, people who can give us relevant information, reporters who are prepared to stand up for others and pursue the truth. Mobile journalism is not killing traditional journalism in fact it is upgrading traditional journalism. Both are working with the collaboration of each other and can be

termed as “Advance Journalism” as it involves advancing the communication technology. So it is clear that Mojo is helping the media to serve its purpose more efficiently.

2. Efficiency due to MoJo

One of the factors which often bugs people regarding the very concept of journalism is the fact that it is a job which involves a lot of investment of physical, mental labor but above all of TIME but in order to pacify such problems, Mobile journalism is a very effective alternative. Now, in an average it takes approx. 15 Minutes to start a shoot, within which assembling of lighting, camera gears and proper positioning of all the subjects takes place, but a large part of this hassle can be eliminated if MoJo is taken into consideration. In today's time, with the technological development, Smart Phone can be effectively used as a miniature studio⁹ for the purpose of recording, editing and publishing the content on the different caterers of content, for example: Official website of the news channel, Personal website, micro blogs, etc. With MoJo, performed using a well-equipped Smart Phone, above mentioned hassle can be diminished, Phones like Google Pixel 3 is equipped with the ‘Night Sight’ feature which is helpful for low-light video recording and photography, Huawei Mate 20 comprise of multiple lens including wide-angle lens which helps in capturing high resolution, wide angle landscape shots and Apple iPhone XS comes with an Operating Image Stabilization (OIS) system [2], so at the time when the subject is to be covered and is in motion, then OIS help to protect the recording or image to experience any sort of distortion and many phones come with the feature of Auto Mode with the help of which camera setting configure itself as per the lighting requirements and adjustable aperture and ISO can also be accessed through manual mode. Mainstream implementation of MoJo has been widely seen in the news broadcasting channel, NDTV in which for the purpose of covering news, Samsung S8 model smartphone was extensively used. Since, MoJo accounts for mobility, lack of labor requirement, elimination of many hassles of carrying and adjusting associated with the traditional journalism and is ever ready for use, just some clicks away. It saves the most important thing which is Time, which can further be invested in other events say, editing and polishing of the quality of the content.

3. Improvement yet to be made

In the future line of actions, it can be expected that mobile journalism may become the primary source of news outlet because the very ethos of mobile journalism is based around internet. Within the country of India as per February 2018, there are approx. 455 million active users of Internet and is expected to raise to 650 million by 2020 [3]. Therefore, with each successive year, accessibility of people to such internet-based outlet will increase which may reduce the sales of tangible newspaper in the long run. Now, MoJo is still in its infancy stage due to which many amendments are required to be incorporated: -

- Organizations gravitating towards this journalism, should arrange a training session for the purpose of inculcating better expertise of employees in such journalism.

- Workshops should be held at education institutions for teaching MoJo and should be introduced as an extra-curricular activity at schools.
- Quality audio and visual recording functions should be incorporated into smart phones belonging to lower price range so that mobile journalism can be accessible to wider audience of the country [4].
- Better editing applications are required to be produced in order to attain optimum use of phone's hardware and to make the content more polished [5].
- Most of the time, the news acquired through MoJo is very unfiltered and disjointed, because of the reason of providing right on time footage of the event but certain standards of content are needed to be generated by large media houses, so that quality of new method of journalism.

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