

Impact of Smartphones on News Gathering and Reporting by Journalists in Kwara State

Social & Digital
Media Discourse

2021, Vol.2(1), 55-67

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Abstract

The advent of the new information and communication technologies (ICT) brought new innovations to the media industry worldwide. The development of the ICT revolutionised the practice of journalism with the introduction of new tools, which have not only enhanced the outputs of professional journalists but also altered the practices of journalism all over the world. The role of the ICT, especially smartphones and the Internet, cannot be overemphasised as they serve pivotal functions in changing and altering the practices of journalism. This study examined the impact of smartphones on news gathering and reporting among journalists in Kwara State, using survey questionnaire as research tool. Census sampling method was employed to seek information from 148 registered working journalists in Kwara State of Nigeria. The results showed that smartphone was popularly being used by majority of journalists in Kwara State for their professional activities and that the device has greatly enhanced their performances. The study recommended that media houses should provide journalists with multifunctional smartphones and facilitate adequate training on the optimum usage of such new gadgets for improved performances.

Keywords: ICT, smartphones, journalism practices, impact, journalists

Introduction

Every new technological development in the society has always witnessed accompanied change in the various systems and institutions of the society. This is ultimately unavoidable so as to maintain relevance and credence in the increasingly growing society we find ourselves (Alfred & Atkin, 2020; Nwafor, 2010). Nwafor (2010) is of the opinion that communication, as the most essential system in the society, has always leveraged on available technological tools to transmit messages and information at interpersonal, group and mass levels.

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; Singh & Samah, 2018). Smartphone can be referred to as a minicomputer, with features and functions as computer in the handy form (Rambitan, 2015). Singh & Samah (2018) describe smartphone as a magical device with the ability of a computer coupled with the conventional functions of the mobile phone. Boulos, Jones and Wheeler (as cited in Singh and Samah, 2018) say that smartphone is a mobile device, which has not only the ability of a computer but also provides users with advance communication prowess much higher than the traditional mobile phones as it is equipped with the internet access, high quality camera, and multimedia management tools. Latest smartphones are viewed as handheld computers rather than a normal phone because of their powerful computing ability and large memory (Miller, cited in Singh & Samah, 2018) The capacity of running feature-rich application (apps) on smartphone makes it a more powerful device,

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fussing many earlier stand-alone devices such as alarms, clocks, calculators, laptops, GPS navigators and digital cameras into one omnibus tool.

According to Rambitan (2015), the traditional 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. These have transformed the emerging new smartphone into an essential working device for professional journalists.

According to Umair (2016), the increased use of mobile technology by reporters has also started to raise questions about how to best incorporate this form of newsgathering tool into existing media activities. 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.

Mobile Journalists 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. In the recent time, smartphone is not only popular among professional journalists but many journalism schools have also accepted it and include it in the training curriculum of their students.

Bui and Moran (2020) explain how journalism schools were adapting to the increasing integration and proliferation of mobile technologies within journalism production and consumption, and the increasing trend to incorporate relevant technical skills training within courses because it integrates the “mobilities paradigm” to insert questions about social meanings and implications of the “mobile turn” within journalism and journalism education, exploring how mobile subjectivities are deeply embedded within and undergird mobile journalism and journalism education infrastructure.

Garyantes and Berkey-Gerard (2015) also note that mobile devices such as smartphones and media

tablets have brought significant technical innovations to the news industry, as users are offered the ability to produce as much as they consume. Haak, Park and Castells (2012, p. 2924) buttress that “in the digital environment in which journalists now work, new facts are being unearthed daily”, as there are more of audience feedback being integrated, improvement in quality of sound and audio output, more in-depth explanation or exploration of various angles to news, more stories disseminated at shorter/faster time, improvement in carrying out the media surveillance role, and more people are involved not only in consuming media product, but in producing it as well.

Therefore, if journalists are efficient in their responsibility of gathering information, interpreting it, and spreading it, it is because they have now been empowered with technological means now than before (Haak, et al., 2012), especially during electioneering and political campaign period (Ohme, 2019). In addition, this has globally presented media audience, better opportunity at being better informed, and a chance of contributing to or commenting on the media product they consume (Fortunati & O’Sullivan, 2020).

Westlund (2012) observes that the advent of ICT equipment, which are now being used in the production, recording, programming, gathering, processing and transmission of news events, especially in the television broadcast station in Nigeria, has enhanced or improved delivery of broadcasting services. And this has become easier in the light of the use of smartphones, subsuming the functions of heavy and power requiring technological equipment. With the new trend of adopting smartphone as a major tool for news gathering and reporting all over the world, this paper examines the pattern of use, and the impact of smartphone use on the professional activities of journalists in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Literature Review

Mobile Telephony in Nigeria

The incursion and acceptability of smartphones in Nigeria cannot be singled out of the very context of the history of telecommunication development in Nigeria. Therefore, the history of smartphone will be studied from the very penetration of mobile

phone into Nigeria, which is as a result of the growth in the telecommunication sector.

The inception of mobile phone in Nigeria can be linked to the deregulation of the telecommunication sector, which informed the licensing of two foreign telecommunication operators, MTN and ECONET wireless, as well as the state-owned M-TEL in the year 2001 (Fatoki, in Nwachukwu & Onyenakeya, 2017). It is, however, unfortunate that the monopoly of the telecommunication service by Nigeria Telecommunication Limited (NITEL) encouraged poor management by the sole controller, the state (Fatoki, in Nwachukwu & Onyenakeya, 2017). In the meantime, the country's rising demand for phone line and ancillary services was becoming too overbearing for only NITEL to handle. Obviously, complaints on congestion and unreliability of the telephone service in the country was the resultant of the failure of the NITEL to meet the country's demand.

In addition to the issue of unreliability and congested service, the service was inconveniently expensive and unaffordable to the common man living in Nigerian, whereas the few rich and privileged ones in the society enjoyed the telephone service in the country. These were the shortcomings that bedeviled the initial days of mobile telecommunication service in the country. Eventually, these issues were dealt with when democracy was brought to telephone service by the GSM operators, as many who were previously financially or economically excluded, could now access it affordably and comfortably. This thereby assisted the sporadic growth of subscriber's base since 2002 when GSM was introduced in the country. According to Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC, 2016), the active GSM subscribers in the year 2016 hit 148.8 million with a teledensity of 106.32%.

Much more now, the GSM sector controls 99.1% of the telecommunication market in Nigeria (Nwachukwu & Onyenakeya, 2017). Subsequently, in the light of GSM polarization, smartphone has become an integral part of the Nigerian society, and greatly exert influence on various institutions and parts of the society, especially communication. Pew Survey (2016) reveals that about 28% of adults own a smartphone in Nigeria.

In summary, the mobile telephony service has no small influence on the prevalent use and accessibility to the internet. As Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC) at 2017 gave 145.1 million as the total population of mobile subscribers in Nigeria, and which internet subscription on mobile phone as of that time takes up to 98.4 million i.e. 68% of the population of mobile subscribers (Omomia, cited in Kaul, 2013). This showed that without mobile phones, usage and accessibility of internet will be relatively low in Nigeria.

Essentially, the mobile phone has undergone transformation in the meantime, as at the initial stage, only phone calls and texting of sms messages were the prevalent use of the mobile phones (Sarwar & Soomro, 2013). The evolution of the telephone has both been in hardware and software i.e. phones evolve from the bulky ones to smaller, lighter, attractive and sleek ones; and also evolve into faster and efficient processing of information, and as well introduction of applications (Sarwar & Soomro, 2013).

News Gathering and Reporting in the Digital Age

The emergence of digital age and its innumerable impact on the media and journalism as a profession, in no small way has its prospects but likewise its challenges. As identified by Tuwgenese and Meyer (as cited in Kaul, 2013), journalists work in this age have been magnified, as what a number of journalists is required to do now is subsumed into what one is now expected to be skilled in and show the best of performance therein. Kaul (2013) points out how reporters have been given names befitting their activity as they are now being called information monitors (Deuze, as cited in Kaul 2013), networked journalism (Jarus, as cited in Kaul 2013) and gate watchers (Burns, as cited in Kaul 2013). Hence, the workload and demand on journalists in this digital age is more on the reporter who has to learn several operating functions, working at the same time as producer, editor and presenter. Previously, it used to be a division of labour among various personnel in the media industry, but technology has made complex the work of a reporter to investigating, producing and disseminating news.

Kaul (2013) observes that a journalist has become a specialist but not in anything in particular but in effective ways to practice journalism. Currently, the media industry serving as employment avenues for human workforce is gradually giving way to one-person participating media as well as maintaining editorial independence. Kaul adds that news gathering and presentation which once needed a huge staff working with technical personnel and equipment, now requires just one of camcorder, notebook, computer, or smartphone.

Thus, to survive in this more demanding and competitive environment, news producers will have to get new ways to profit from smaller share of the total audience (Kaul, 2013). Journalism has also become more challenging as technology becomes more complex. The task of investigating, producing and disseminating news increased not only the skills required of a reporter, but also the speed of writing and disseminating reports becomes instantaneous (Kaul, 2013).

Moreover, there are updates happening in the modification and improvements of these technologies, to an extent at which new ones are released without the old one fully in use or mastered yet. Upgrade does not wait for anyone. Therefore, the challenge is that while journalists are still grappling with the usage of a particular function in a smartphone for their work, another model pops up *ad infinitum*. Hence, the future functions and practices of journalists are subjected to a lot of societal and technological changes.

Andeyaba-Samson (2017) points out in his critical submission on how technologies change the way journalists gather and present their reports to suit the demands and needs of the audience. He notes that this has made the audience active and participatory, hence powerful in making decisions over their media experience and producing content themselves. This stand as a challenge to the supremacy and monopoly of the means of gathering and production of news which the media

have. For journalists to manage this situation, it is best to incorporate interactions with the public, show transparency in their work processes, do specialised reports, be timelier, and even incorporate multimedia features in their reports.

There is also the issue of fragmented public whose attention is divided in the information overloaded society, as pointed out by Andeyaba-Samson (2017), who explains that journalists need to be skilled in the use of technological devices to create multimedia formats which can serve as a specialized report meant to compete with various blogs and webpages. Specifically, Okafor (as cited in Andeyaba-Samson, 2017), identified challenges of news gathering in the digital era to include majorly: Corruption and lack of expertise. Corruption, according to him, is a factor militating against effective news gathering in the era of new media technologies, such as demanding for financial gratifications before an event would be given news coverage or before a story is used. Lack of Expertise deal with how news gathering in the 21st century required expertise for both in the practice and the use of new media technologies for effective reporting. It also required adequate training of media personnel (journalists). This required expertise is lacking in most developing countries (Okafor, as cited in Andeyaba-Samson, 2017).

Meanwhile, Bradshaw (2009) diagrammatically illustrates what is obtainable in journalism before the digital age and thereafter. The era showed production team members separately performing their duties to ensure the successful news production. Activities involves the beat reporters covering events and writing a report, which would be transferred to the editor to vet and approve, after which it would be fine-tuned and reported to the public by presenters or casters or through the paper medium in print. The following models explained the pre-digital age situation of news gathering and reporting.

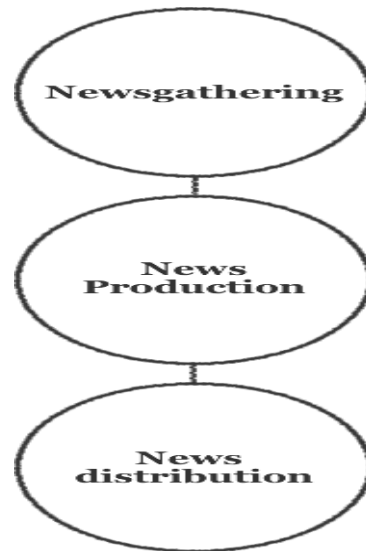


Figure 1: News Gathering and Reporting in pre-Digital Age (Bradshaw, 2009 Online Journalism Blog).

In the digital age, however, newsgathering, production and distribution are often the same thing but with some new differences. Journalists or news operators in this era usually seek to make as much of their activity visible, adding value to what they do and providing numerous access points for

users to get information about not just the content but the process also. Journalism is thus becoming less polished, more interactive, and more networked, as journalists as well as the audience are now the distributors.



Figure 2: News Gathering and Reporting in the post-Digital Age (Bradshaw, 2009 Online Journalism Blog).

Rodman (2012), corroborates Bradshaw's submission in his opinion of the latest trend hitting the world of journalism now, which he called the one-person correspondent team also known as Back Pack Journalist

He adds that the crux of Back Pack Journalist is his/her ability to multitask; he does all processes involved in producing the content i.e. shooting, writing, editing and publishing online, leveraging on the use of internet. With smartphone, a

journalist does not need backpack anymore to go to the field and effectively carry out a report in less time than it had been previously done. The figure above shows the situation of the news gathering and reporting at the period after the digital age.

Technological Acceptance Model (TAM)

Factors that influence an individual's decision to adopt a new technology or device have been a focus in user acceptance, social cognition, social

psychology, and innovation diffusion scholarships for the past several decades. User acceptance research and innovation diffusion scholarship, in particular, have been used to develop several theories and models that help to explain the adoption of new information technologies.

This study uses the Technology Acceptance Model as the theoretical framework that explains and drives the frame of reference for the research, in analysing the impact which the usage and adoption of smartphone has on the journalists. Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) has proven to be a theoretical model in explaining and predicting user behaviour of formation technology. Hence, TAM has two core beliefs which it put forward to be motivating factor responsible for adoption and usage of technologies: they are perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use (Ajzen & Fishben, as cited in Kwak & McDaniel, 2011).

Hypotheses

Based on the belief that technology is only adopted if there are intrinsic motivations as postulated by Davison in his Technology Acceptance Model, with special reference to perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness, the following hypotheses are advanced to explicate adoption of smartphone for professional practice by journalists in Kwara State of Nigeria.

- H1: Perceived ease of use of smartphone for news gathering and reporting predict the perceived usefulness for news gathering and reporting by journalists in Kwara state
- H2: Perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness of smartphone for news gathering and reporting predicts attitude towards adoption of smartphones for news gathering and reporting by journalists in Kwara state

Method

A survey research method was adopted, using questionnaire as a research tool. The population of the study was journalists/reporters working at the various media outlets across Kwara state. In accordance with the records available from the Nigeria Union of Journalists, Kwara State Chapter, there is an estimation of 148 registered journalists

in Kwara state. Census sampling technique was used to gather information from the target population.

Measurement of Variables

The following concepts were operationalised and measured as followed.

Attitude to smartphone

Attitude refers to Kwara state journalists' beliefs or knowledge, feelings or emotions towards the usage of smartphones for news gathering and reporting. It has to do with the way journalists in Kwara state feel, believe and their behavioural intentions towards the usage of smartphones for news gathering and reporting activities. Attitude of journalists was measured on a 5-point Likert scale with some strategic statements, of which respondents are to show their level of agreement with strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree.

Perceived Usefulness

This has to do with how useful and relevant smartphone can be to news gathering and reporting, which serves as motivation to the use of smartphones by journalists in Kwara state for news gathering and reporting. Perceived usefulness was measured in 5 strategic statements on 5-point Likert scale, in which journalists were required to show the level of agreement with the proposed usefulness of smartphones.

Perceived Ease of Use

This refers to the convenience of using smartphone which has encouraged journalists in Kwara state to make use of it for news gathering and reporting. Perceived ease of use was measured with questions requiring journalists to highlight their level of agreement with 5 strategic statements relating to the convenience and ease of use of smartphones on a 5-point Likert scale.

Results

Demographic Analysis

The demographic information of respondents as regards this study includes gender, age, educational qualification, organisation they work for and position at the organisation. Table 1 shows respondents demographic profile in frequency and percentage.

The table shows that 62.2% (92 of 148 respondents) are males, while females are 37.8% (56). This shows the dominance of male in

the journalism profession in Kwara State. On age, about half of the respondents 47.3% were within the age range of 31-40 years of age. The table also indicated HND/B.A/B.Sc as the educational qualification of the majority of the respondents with 67.6%, which showed the averagely qualification of most journalists in Kwara state is either HND/B.A or B.Sc.

Table 1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic Variables	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Gender		
Male	92	62.2
Female	56	37.8
Total	148	100
Age		
18-30yrs	38	25.7
31-40yrs	70	47.3
41-50yrs	26	17.6
50+	14	9.5
Total	148	100
Education		
NCE/OND	29	19.6
HND/BA/BSc	100	67.6
MSc/PhD	19	12.8
Total	148	100

Table 2 presents the attitude of respondents towards the adoption of smartphones for news gathering and reporting. Generally, respondents slightly agree to making use of smartphones for gathering and reporting of news stories ($M= 2.20$, $SD= 0.80$). Specifically, respondents agree that making use of smartphones for news gathering reporting makes them technologically upto date ($M= 2.20$, $SD= 0.80$), that using smartphone is a good and wise idea ($M= 1.40$, $SD= 0.60$), as well as that the use of smartphone for news gathering and reporting is fun and interesting ($M= 1.80$, $SD= 0.70$). However, they strongly disagree to use of smartphone being frustrating for news gathering and reporting ($M= 3.50$, $SD= 1.10$).

Hence, respondents' attitude towards adoption of smartphone for news gathering and reporting shows significant level of agreement, as most of the statements presented in the table were strongly agreed and agreed to. With exception only to how frustrating the use of smartphones for news gathering and reporting is, which is also a positive attitude to not find the use of smartphone frustrating. The table therefore, largely shows positive attitude of the respondents towards adoption of smartphone for news gathering and reporting.

Table 2 Attitude towards Adoption of Smartphones for News Gathering and Reporting

Attitude towards adoption	Level of Agreement* (%)					M	SD	Overall %
	SA	A	N	D	SD			
Using smartphone is a good and wise idea	60.1	35.8	4.1	0.0	0	1.40	0.60	28.0
Use of smartphone for news gathering and reporting is fun and interesting	33.1	57.4	4.7	4.7	0	1.80	0.70	36.0
It is frustrating to use smartphone for news gathering and reporting	7.4	10.1	21.6	52	8.8	3.50	1.10	70.0
Using smartphone for new gathering and reporting is comfortable	20.9	41.2	27.	10.8	0	2.30	0.90	46.0
Use of smartphone for news gathering and reporting makes me confident	18.9	35.1	30.4	12.2	3.4	2.50	1.10	50.0
Using smartphone for news gathering and reporting is encouraging	17.6	66.9	8.8	5.4	1.4	2.10	0.80	42.0
Use of smartphone for news gathering reporting makes me technologically up to date	68.9	28.4	0.7	0.7	1.4	1.20	0.70	24.0
Total						2.20	0.80	44.0

Scale *: 1-SA (0-20%), 2-A (21-40%), 3-N (41-60%), 2-D (61-80%), SD- (81-100%)

This probes into the perceived usefulness (PU) of smartphones which influences the use by the respondents. Respondents level of agreement and

disagreement on some statements on PU are presented in Table 3

Table 3 Perceived Usefulness of Smartphones for News Gathering and Reporting

Perceived Usefulness of Smartphone	Level of Agreement*(%)					M	SD	Overall %
	SA	A	N	D	SD			
Smartphones are useful and relevant to my work	56.1	40.5	2.7	0.7	0.0	1.50	0.60	30.0
Using smartphones help in improving output and results	32.4	50.7	13.5	3.4	0.0	1.90	0.80	38.0
Smartphones enable me to reach larger and wider range of audience	46.6	35.1	8.8	8.1	1.40	1.80	1.00	36.0
Using Smartphones increase efficiency in work	41.2	52	5.4	1.4	0.0	1.70	0.60	34.0
Smartphones ensure timeliness and accuracy of delivery in work	60.1	33.1	6.8	0.0	0.0	1.50	0.60	30.0
Total						1.70	0.70	34.0

Scale *: 1-SA (0-20%), 2-A (21-40%), 3-N (41-60%), 2-D (61-80%), SD- (81-100%)

Table 3 shows respondents perceived usefulness of smartphone for news gathering and reporting.

Overall, respondents agree to perceiving smartphone to be useful for news gathering and

reporting ($M= 1.70$, $SD= 0.70$). Precisely, respondents agree that smartphones ensure timeliness and accuracy in their delivery in work ($M= 1.50$, $SD= 0.60$), that smartphones are useful and relevant to them ($M= 1.50$, $SD= 0.60$), and that smartphones help increase the efficiency in their work ($M= 1.70$, $SD= 0.60$).

However, after discovering the respondents perceived usefulness of smartphones for news gathering and reporting, it becomes essential to find out their perceived ease of use of smartphone to fulfill that purpose. The result for their perceived ease of use is presented in Table 4.

Table 4 Perceived Ease of Use of Smartphones for News Gathering and Reporting

Perceived Ease of Use of Smartphone	Level of Agreement*(%)						Overall	
	SA	A	N	D	SD	M	SD	%
Smartphone is accessible, affordable and convenient in use	63.5	24.3	10.1	1.4	0.7	1.50	0.8	30.0
Smartphone requires little or no technical knowhow to use	12.2	33.8	25	26.4	2.7	2.70	1.1	54.0
Smartphones are portable and can be easily carried around	76.4	23	0.7	0.0	0.0	1.20	0.4	24.0
Smartphone has multifunctioning and multitasking function	25.7	41.2	27	6.1	0.0	2.10	0.9	42.0
Smartphones ensure easier compatibility and transferring content from one format to another	26.4	27	29.1	15.5	2.0	2.40	1.1	48.0
Total						2.00	0.9	40.0

Scale *: 1-SA (0-20%), 2-A (21-40%), 3-N (41-60%), 2-D (61-80%), SD- (81-100%)

Scale *: 1-SA (0-20%), 2-A (21-40%), 3-N (41-60%), 2-D (61-80%), SD- (81-100%)

Table 4 details the result of the respondents perceived ease of use of smartphone for news gathering and reporting. Generally, respondents agree to the ease of using smartphones for news gathering and reporting ($M= 2.00$, $SD= 0.9$). Specifically, respondents agree that smartphones are portable and they find it easy to carry around ($M= 1.20$, $SD= 0.4$). Also, smartphone is accessible, affordable and convenient to use for them ($M= 1.50$, $SD= 0.8$). However, they slightly disagree that smartphone requires little or no

technical knowhow to use ($M= 2.70$, $SD= 1.1$), which means that respondents believe there is a need for technical knowhow to for the ease use of smartphone.

H1: PEOU of smartphones predicts PU of smartphone among journalists in Kwara state.

Regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis of this study. The results of the test, as presented in Table 5 revealed model contribution of perceived ease of use to perceived usefulness of smartphone for gathering by reporters in Nigeria.

Table 5: Influence of Perceived Ease of Use on Perceived Usefulness of Smartphones for News Gathering and Reporting

Model	β	SE	t	P
1 (Constant)	6.286	.748	8.399	.001
PEOU	.203	.073	2.789	.006

$F_{(1, 146)}=7.776$, $p=.006$, $R^2=.051$

Dependent Variable: perceived usefulness

Results from linear regression show that PEOU predicts 5.1% variance in PU of smartphones for news gathering and reporting among journalist in Kwara state. Additionally, the results revealed positive contribution of PEOU to PU ($\beta=.203$, $p=.006$). Hence, hypothesis 1 of the study is conformed.

H2: PEOU and PU of smartphones predicts attitude towards adoption of smartphones among journalists in Kwara state.

Hypothesis 2 of the study is also analysed with a regression analysis as presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Influence of PEOU and PU on Attitude towards Adoption of Smartphone for News Gathering and Reporting

Model		β	SE	t	P
1	(Constant)	10.887	1.245	8.748	.001
	PEOU	.237	.102	2.324	.022
	PU	.193	.113	1.707	.090

$F_{(2, 145)}=5.319$, $p=.006$, $R^2=.068$

Dependent Variable: Attitude

Results from the multiple regression revealed that both PEOU and PU predict 6.8% variance ($R^2=0.68$, $p=.006$). However, only PEOU ($\beta=.237$, $t=2.324$, $p=.022$) has significant contribution to the model. The contribution of PU is though positive but not statistically significant ($\beta=.193$, $t=1.707$, $p=.090$). This means that attitude towards using smartphone for professional engagement is hinged on PEOU that PU of the smartphone. With these results, hypothesis 2 of the study is partially upheld.

Discussion

Based on the outlined research objectives and concomitant questions, this study found out in the respondents' demography that there are more male journalists than female journalists in Kwara state, most are shown to be or younger than the age of 40, with most having HND/BA/BSc as their educational qualification. In several studies similarities is found in the gender, age and educational qualification demography (Okon & Eleba, 2013; Andeyaba-Samson, 2017).

The findings reveal that the majority of journalists in Kwara state, use smartphone for news gathering and reporting for not less than five days in a week, and above four hours per day. Moreover, it was found that majority of journalists in Kwara state agreed to the use of smartphones for some of the activities involved in the process of news gathering and reporting. Therefore, the

smartphone usage among journalists in Kwara state is significant.

Findings of this study also revealed attitude of journalists in Kwara state to be largely positive towards the adoption of smartphone for news gathering and reporting. Journalists in Kwara state find the use of smartphone wise and good, fun and interesting, comfortable, non-frustrating, confidence boosting, encouraging and technologically up-to-date.

Moreover, the findings also indicated that journalists in Kwara state perceived smartphone as a useful tool for gathering and reporting news. Most of the journalists agreed that smartphone is useful and relevant to their work, improves output, enables wider and larger reach, increases efficiency at work, and ensure timeliness and accuracy in delivery. Similarly, they also perceived smartphone as being easy to use in gathering and reporting news by journalists in Kwara state. Findings show that journalists perceived smartphone as accessible, affordable, convenient, requires little technical knowhow, portable, multitasking in functions, and ultimately easier to use in gathering news and reporting likewise.

The modest contributions of perceived ease of use to perceived usefulness as well as those of the combination of perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness to attitudes towards using smartphone for professional practice proved the power of intrinsic factors in adoption of technology and innovative practices as posited by Technological

Acceptance Model. The significance of these findings is that journalists are becoming comfortable with mobile technologies in the course of their practices. This new forms of journalism can be likened to what Ahmed, El-Kasim and Mustapha (2017) labeled as the emergence of Mobile Learning, (m-Learning), Electronic Learning (e-Learning) and Ubiquitous Learning (u-Learning) in their study of students' intention to use smartphone for academic activities. Hence, intending adoption of smartphone for news gathering and reporting among journalists in Kwara state could instantiate the era of e-journalism, m-journalism and u-journalism that is expanding and glamorizing the practice of journalism in today's world.

Conclusion

This study discovered that smartphones were very popular with journalists in Kwara State and utilized extensively to enhance professional performances. It is, therefore, recommended that the media houses in the state should provide their journalists with multi-functional smartphones and train them well on the optimum use of the devices in order to serve the media organisations and their audiences efficiently. Premised on Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the study was restricted to a few constructs, chiefly PEOU, PU and attitude towards adoption of smartphone for journalistic practice in Kwara state. This demilitation opens opportunities for future works to explore the totality of TAM model with integration of external factors like level of education, level of professionalism, organisational support, digital literacy, among others to unpack the ramifications of professional use of mobile/smart technologies among journalists.

The study is also limited by locale, population, design and methodological restrictions. Future studies in this area could expand the population by replicating and extending the findings of this study regionally, nationally and internationally. Mixed method design and sophisticated analytical mechanisms like multiple regression, structural equation modelling could help in better profiling of the results for better theoretical, practical and policy recommendations.

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How to Cite: Abubakar, I. Y., Adekeye, T. E., Udende, P., Adisa, R. M., Omoloso, A. I. & Kareem, R. A. (2021). Impact of Smartphones on News Gathering and Reporting by Journalists in Kwara State, *Social & Digital Media Discourse*. 2(1), 55-67.