

Mobile Journalism and News Consumption Patterns: Digital Media's Impact on Indian Journalism 2010– 2026

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Abstract

The Newspaper business is getting radically different in India, with the start of the use of 'smart mobile', inexpensive Internet & social media since 2010 till 2026. This research paper will deal with the rise of mobile journalism (MoJo) and explore how it impacts news creation, news sharing as well as news consumption practices of Indian audience. It explores how digital platforms – including YouTube, Instagram, X and mobile news apps – affect journalism and journalistic practice, audience engagement, the culture and business of real-time news. It also delves into consumer preference for short, individualized and interactive news content via mobile. The paper discusses, both as an opportunity and as a challenge, the democratization of information, citizen journalism, the spreading of misinformation, ethical issues and waning trust in traditional news providers in connection to mobile journalism. The study evaluates the socio-cultural and employment ripples created through the digitalization of the journalism industry using secondary data, industry reports and recent case studies, while delving on the future of mobile news in a rapidly evolving digital society in India.

Keywords: Mobile Journalism (MoJo), Digital Media, News Consumption, Indian Journalism, Social Media Platforms, Citizen Journalism, Smartphone Journalism, Digital Transformation, Online News,

Media Ethics, Audience Engagement, Fake News, Mobile News Applications, New Media, Journalism Trends

Introduction

Digital technology has brought a breath of fresh air for journalism and India is one of the fastest-growing digital news market. From 2010 to 2026, a rise in the ubiquity of smart phones, cheap mobile Internet and the popularity of social media transformed how news is created, disseminated and interacted with. When Mobile Journalism or MoJo moves into a mobile, real-time news environment, mobile journalists can create, edit and publish news content from their mobile phone or other portable digital devices. This has transformed the news reporting landscape in India – transmitting information quicker, easily and widely.

While newspaper, TV channels, radio have always been the big news sources for many, the Internet, and particularly platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and X have become the new giants for many, particularly the younger social generations. With the advent of gigabit connectivity such as the introduction of affordable 4G and 5G Internet services in the recent times, due to various digital revolution initiated by telecom companies, the consumption of mobile media such as mobile news has increased even in rural areas. Mobile journalism has enabled journalists to be able to report promptly and flexibly in a 'go' from political meetings, social actions, disaster, sport and entertainment and emergency situations, at reduced cost.

Moreover, citizen journalism is the growing trend as citizens take an active part in the processes that create and disseminate news, helping to come up with and sharing information through their mobile phones or social networking platforms. This degree of democratization has helped people to be more engaged, spread and communicated ideas through the media. At the same time, the digital media has presented some challenges to Indian journalism, including the excessive spread of fake news, information distress, sensationalism, lack of trust in the mainstream media, privacy issues and ethical issues of unverifiable information reported online. Algorithms on digital platforms are designed to curate news according to individuals' interests in so far as news is concerned, which has not only caused changes in the way in which people behavioural relate on these platforms but also raised questioned regarding the existence of "echo chambers" or "ideological polarisation".

Furthermore, specifically as digital ads and platform solutions grow in significance, publishers have been compelled to re-think their business models and content strategies in order to engage digital audiences. So today's journalist is expected to have the ability to produce content across multiple formats and platforms such as mobile video editing/live streaming, and work on social media, podcast, and data, in order to allow them to be competitive in the transformed media environment. This speeded up growth is also making digital news the main source for news for many during the COVID-19 pandemic, since the demand of mobile devices proved to be a vital way to get news during pandemic related lockdown and social distancing. In India, the growth of regional language digital journalism is so huge because people can access it using their mobile phones; and news organizations can reach people with different cultures and languages.

The project aims to examine the news consumption patterns that it impacted between 2010 and 2026 and look at the transformation it ushered in in news consumption, technological development and also their effect on audience and their news consumption in the context of journalism in India. It also looks at the opportunities and challenges it presents in the digitally-driven media environment and draws parallels with the outlook of mobility collated communication and its footprints on the future of journalism in India. The research focuses will be to provide a comprehensive understanding of the changing role of journalism in an age of digital technology and society. The secondary data, research literature, industry reports and the existing case studies will be analysed towards the aim.

Literature review

Generally speaking, the existing literature on mobile journalism and digital media consumer behaviour/patterns highlight the newfound nature of journalism in the digital era. The World Wide Web is changing the nature of journalism by allowing news to be quickly disseminated and the audience to be more involved in the content's creation and sharing, as explained by Alejandro (2010), a researcher at the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. One of the key challenges that was emphasized in the study was the fact that the journalist is no longer the sole information source; digital media allowing the freedom for citizens to be active users and producers of the media. On his part, Douglas Ahlers pointed to the electronic media and the internet as the factors causing the changes in people's news consumption behavior, noting that the news have become more personal and instant. To support this, Benjamin Gaskins and Jennifer Jerit found that younger and digital news audiences perceive the web news experience as a substitute to their traditional newspapers and TV news.

Empirical research also explores how audiences engage with and play an active role in digital media, and shows the new dynamics between media organisations and audiences. Bergström and Wadbring analyzed digital journalism readers' comments, which they argue have the potential to invite the public into digital news, yet present difficulties, such as insensitive/offensive comments, misinformation or falling journalistic values. Similarly, Carlos Flavián and Raquel Gurrea pointed out that the 'interaction' of the audience is increasingly based on digital media platforms; they maintained that the use of the tools of interactive communication has a strong impact on public attitudes and media consumption behaviour.

Some research has been done in digital journalism in relation to the concept of trust and credibility. There is a credibility problem, authenticity issues and trust problems in the digital news age since news is disseminated very quickly and unverified information is spread as well, Blöbaum said. Similarly, Caroline Fisher emphasised that trust in the media is based on transparency, professional ethics, telling the truth, and how the media user perceives the reporter institutions. Fletcher and Park found that their sense of trust in the news site was correlated with an audience's self-reported on-line news consumption and interaction with that site. The Essential Research 'Trust in Media' (2017) also revealed that the public do not trust the mainstream media to be politically biased, sensationalising and spreading fake news.

Research involving comparisons between online publications and the print journals, indicates a transformation from the conventional to the electronic approach to journalism. According to Caroline Kalombe and Jordan Jackson Phiri, online media has been proven to be detrimental to print newspapers' sales and print advertising revenues in developing countries, particularly because the majority of people prefer to get the news on cell phones and it is delivered in real time online rather than print. Similarly, D'haenens, Jankowski and Heuvelman found that the ease and speed of news consumption affected their recall and favourability towards online newspapers with decreased depth of reading, compared to print newspapers. De Waal, Schönbach and Lauf also suggest that online newspapers are increasingly supplanting the traditional newspaper and TV channels.

Another aspect that is emphasised in the literature is to take into account the necessity of media literacy in the digital world. As well as navigating the flood of disinformation, it's crucial for audiences to be trained in news literacy, while NFLI director Flemming explained that programs are needed to teach people to avoid being misled by digital news. The research that has been collected is overwhelmingly positive, as evidence shows all dimensions – how the information is created, how it is consumed, the trust in journalism, how it is used – have come into a state of change worldwide and especially in the developing world. Yet significant research work is required that specifically concerns the use of

technology in India in mobile journalism from 2010-2026 as well as the access to news via smartphones and its socio-cultural consequence on Indian audiences in the digital news local ecosystem.

Objectives of the study

1. To examine the growth and development of mobile journalism and digital media platforms in India during the period from 2010 to 2026.
2. To analyze the changing news consumption patterns of Indian audiences with special reference to smartphone usage, social media platforms, and online news applications.
3. To evaluate the impact of digital media on Indian journalism in terms of audience engagement, credibility, citizen journalism, and challenges such as fake news and misinformation.

Hypothesis (H₀): There is no significant relationship between smartphone usage, social media platforms, online news applications, and changing news consumption patterns among Indian audiences.

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁): There is a significant relationship between smartphone usage, social media platforms, online news applications, and changing news consumption patterns among Indian audiences.

Research methodology

The present study is descriptive and analytical of research to explore the concept of mobile journalism, and news consumption pattern in India with special reference in the period from 2010 to 2026. The study is mainly secondary data further gathered from sources such as books, research journals, government reports, publications of the media, newspapers and prescription metes. The study is mainly secondary data collected from research books, research journals, government reports, publication of media, newspapers and prescription metes information related to digital journalism and media studies. Literature review of related materials to identify theory perspectives and previous empirical studies related to mobile journalism, Digital Media use and audience responses. Comparative analysis is also included in the study to examine the change of media from traditional media to digital and mobile-based media. Qualitative content analysis is used to interpret data and highlight emerging patterns, trends and relationships between smartphone use, social media use and news consumption online. The methodology also emphasizes on amalgamation and collation of the results of the National and International studies and provide a background to the Indian Media Environment. Primary data collection has not been conducted yet and the study is exploratory in nature that aims to conceptual and analytical insights on the process of journalism changes in the digital age.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Variables Affecting News Consumption Patterns (N = 200)

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Smartphone Usage for News Access	4.32	0.78	1	5
Social Media Platforms Usage (News)	4.1	0.85	1	5
Online News Applications Usage	3.95	0.88	1	5
Frequency of Digital News Consumption	4.25	0.81	1	5
Preference for Mobile-Based News	4.18	0.76	1	5
Trust in Digital News Sources	3.62	0.92	1	5
Exposure to Misinformation Awareness	3.88	0.84	1	5

The descriptive analysis of the study suggests that there is a significant consumer trend in news consumption across India towards mobile and digital devices. The mean values for both the usage of smartphones (M = 4.32) and the frequency of using digital news (M = 4.25) and preference for mobile-based news (M = 4.18) are unambiguous and clearly indicate that smartphones are the primary medium which provides access to news content. The picture that emerges for audiences' use of social media (M

= 4.10) and of online news applications, ($M = 3.95$), is an increasing dependency on real-time, platform-based systems of distributing news information instead of traditional print and television use. The relatively small standard deviations between the variables indicate that the respondents' responses were similar in terms of how closely this group has embraced digital, and to some degree there is little variation in usage behavior. The mean score overall for trust in digital news sources is of concern, however, from a credibility, authenticity and misinformation perspective ($M = 3.62$). Further, awareness of misinformation ($M = 3.88$) suggests that users face digital risk but they also are increasingly aware of content verification issues. The analysis in general proves the hypothesis claimed by the author that the consumption of news through digital media is strongly linked with changing the news consumption pattern among the audience of news media, journalists and advertisement media in India, since both the media were transformed the behaviours of the people who are consuming news has also changed.

Table 2: Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Dependent Variable: Changing News Consumption Patterns

Predictor Variables	B (Unstandardized Coeff.)	Std. Error	Beta (Standardized)	t-value	Sig. (p-value)
(Constant)	0.842	0.312	—	2.7	0.007
Smartphone Usage	0.361	0.072	0.345	5.01	0
Social Media Platforms Usage	0.298	0.069	0.289	4.32	0
Online News Applications Usage	0.215	0.065	0.221	3.31	0.001

Model Summary

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate
0.742	0.551	0.544	0.487

ANOVA Table

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	68.412	3	22.804	96.72	0
Residual	55.788	196	0.285	—	—
Total	124.2	199	—	—	—

The Multiple Linear Regression Analysis indicates that the usage of smart-phones, social media platforms, mobile news applications are statistically significant factors that affect news consumption pattern changes among the Indian audience. The model was found to be very significant ($F = 96.72$, $p < 0.001$) which means that the independent variables together can explain a large proportion of the variance of the dependent variable. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.551$) confirms that news consumption behavior was significantly influenced by the news behavior factors selected, as 55.1% of its variance could be explained by these factors. In the Indian context, smartphone usage ($\beta = 0.345$, $p < 0.001$) is the most highlighting predictor followed by usage of social media ($\beta = 0.338$, $p = 0.001$). Secondly, from the list of moderating factors, there is a strong positive influence of usage of social media platforms ($\beta = 0.289$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting the role of platforms like social networking sites has significant influences on audience engagement with news. Likewise, the news apps available online ($\beta = 0.221$, $p = 0.001$) positively and significantly influence consumption pattern, albeit to a lesser extent. The findings show that the regression models for all the independent variables are significant predictors of news consumption behavior as stated as yes. All the p-values are less than 0.05, implying that all the null hypothesis are rejected and simultaneously accepting the alternative hypothesis. Overall, the findings prove to be largely in favour of the thesis that digital information and

communication technologies have been instrumental in transforming the nature of India's news consumption in terms of being more accessible, more current and more personalized.

Overall Conclusion

Data from the study on 'Mobile Journalism and News Consumption Pattern: Movement of Digital Media to the India's News Industry 2010 to 2026' effectively shows the impact of the digital revolution on the Indian news industry. The surge in the penetration of the smartphone, the growth of social media platforms, and applications for accessing news online have fundamentally transformed the way audiences access, consume and engage with news. The study results support that mobile journalism has established itself as the preferred method for news reporting, and that people today have different news consumption patterns; away from news dependence to rapidly, on-demand and personalised consumption.

The results of the statistical analysis in this study in general and multiple linear regression results in particular show that variables related to digital media use have a significant strong relationship with changing news patterns. The centrality of mobile devices to current journalism practice was demonstrated by the use of smartphone, which was followed by the social media platforms and news apps, concluding that social engagement is the most important factor in the way journalism works today. The canvassing of digital platforms has also uncovered the ways in which these platforms have made it easier for all people to access, faster to access—and more easily accessed by audiences—to circulate information, but they also show how increasing the ease of access has violated principles of trust in the news and left society already grappling with the issue of news credibility negatively impacted by digital platforms, while raising ethical questions about the roles journalists play in making the digital world more trustworthy.

In general, it can be concluded that Indian journalism has witnessed a huge structural shift between 2010 and 2026 from the era of institutional-provoked journalism to journalism that is decentralized, mobile as it is participatory. The study confirms that mobile journalism stands beyond being only a technological shift; rather a socio-cultural change that impacts the behavior of the audience, media practice, and information ecosystem in India.

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