

Mobile Reporting and Its Effectiveness in Covering Crimes Against Women in India

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ABSTRACT

In the digital age, the proliferation of mobile technology has transformed the media landscape, offering unprecedented opportunities for news reporting and public engagement especially in crime against women. This study explored the effectiveness of mobile journalism in covering crimes against women, using a survey of 100 respondents. The research aimed to understand perceptions regarding the timeliness, comprehensiveness, accuracy, and overall impact of mobile journalism in this context. Results indicated that mobile journalism is largely valued for its ability to provide timely updates and enhance the visibility of these crimes, with a strong consensus on its accuracy. However, opinions on the comprehensiveness of coverage and its role in raising public awareness were more varied. The study underscores the significant role of mobile journalism while highlighting areas for further improvement to enhance its effectiveness in reporting on crimes against women.

Keywords: Mobile journalism, crimes against women, real-time reporting, public awareness, accuracy, media coverage.

1.0 Introduction

In the digital age, the proliferation of mobile technology has transformed the media landscape, offering unprecedented opportunities for news reporting and public engagement. Mobile journalism, or "mojo," utilizes smartphones and mobile devices to gather, produce, and disseminate news content, enabling journalists to deliver real-time updates and engage with audiences directly (Westlund, O. 2013). This innovation has become particularly significant in the context of covering sensitive and critical issues, such as crimes against women in India.

India, with its vast population and diverse socio-cultural landscape, faces severe challenges regarding the safety and security of women. Despite numerous legislative measures and societal reforms, crimes against women, including sexual assault, domestic violence, and harassment, remain pervasive issues. Traditional media often struggle to cover these incidents comprehensively due to constraints such as limited reporting resources, geographic reach, and sometimes, the reluctance to address sensitive subjects in depth.

Mobile journalism offers a potential solution to these challenges by enabling on-the-spot reporting and broadening the scope of news coverage. Smartphones equipped with high-quality cameras, video recording capabilities, and internet access allow journalists to capture and share real-time footage and information. This immediacy can bring critical issues to light more rapidly than traditional media, potentially leading to quicker responses from authorities and increased public awareness (Kumar, A., & Mohamed Haneef, M. S. 2018).

The effectiveness of mobile journalism in covering crimes against women can be evaluated through several lenses. Firstly, the immediacy of mobile reporting helps in providing timely updates on ongoing cases, which can be crucial for public awareness and mobilizing community action. For instance, live streaming or real-time updates on incidents can alert the public and authorities about urgent situations, fostering a faster response (Kumar, M. 2015).

Secondly, mobile journalism democratizes news reporting by allowing citizen journalists to participate in the media landscape. This inclusivity can lead to a more diverse range of perspectives and stories being highlighted,

especially those that might be overlooked by mainstream media. Citizens equipped with mobile devices can document and share instances of crime, contributing to a broader understanding of the issues and amplifying the voices of survivors.

However, the effectiveness of mobile journalism is not without limitations and challenges. The reliability of information sourced through mobile platforms can be questionable due to issues like unverified content, misinformation, and the lack of journalistic standards (Mahon, J., & Dip, P. T. 2021). Moreover, the digital divide in India—characterized by disparities in access to technology between urban and rural areas—can affect the consistency and reach of mobile reporting. Ensuring that mobile journalism adheres to ethical standards and provides accurate, reliable information is essential for its success. The study takes into account of the effectiveness of mobile journalism in covering crime against women.

Objectives of the Study

- To explore how mobile journalism covers crimes against women
- To examine the effectiveness of mobile journalism in reporting crimes against women.

2.0 Literature Review

Gonu, V. K., (2021) emphasizes the crucial role women play in societal prosperity and the urgent need to address violence against them. The text highlights that gender equality benefits both women and men, yet violence against women remains a pervasive issue globally. Gonu discusses the various obstacles faced by women when reporting crimes, such as difficulties in filing complaints, delays in medical and forensic reports, inadequate police response, and societal pressures that prevent victims from coming forward. The book also points out the systemic issues within law enforcement, including the reluctance of witnesses to support prosecutions and the lack of effective institutional frameworks. To combat these challenges, the author underscores the importance of enhancing investigative techniques and developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) through initiatives like the Bureau of Police Research and Development's Micro Mission 7, which focuses on improving the handling of gender crimes. The study aims to leverage scientific aids and technology to streamline investigations and ensure justice for victims.

Impe A. M., (2019) offers practical advice and ethical guidelines for reporting on sensitive and often underreported topics, emphasizing the importance of accurate, respectful, and responsible journalism. It addresses key aspects such as maintaining the privacy and dignity of survivors, avoiding sensationalism, and providing context to the violence. The handbook also includes strategies for gathering and verifying information, as well as fostering a supportive environment for survivors. This resource is valuable for journalists seeking to enhance their reporting on violence against women and girls, offering insights into best practices and the ethical considerations necessary for effective and compassionate journalism.

Sreedharan, C., & Thorsen, E. (2021) conduct a comprehensive study on the reporting of sexual violence in India. The report analyzes content from ten newspapers in six languages and includes semi-structured interviews with 257 journalists across 14 languages. It reveals that news coverage often highlights rare, extreme cases of sexual violence, focuses predominantly on incidents in urban areas, and heavily relies on police sources without extensive investigation. The study identifies significant challenges faced by journalists, such as safety concerns, difficulties in accessing information, and psychological distress related to their reporting assignments. Notably, nearly 20% of journalists experienced psychological issues, and 55% of female journalists reported facing sexual harassment or violence in the workplace. The report concludes with seven national and ten organizational recommendations to improve reporting practices and provides guidelines for journalists and media organizations to enhance their coverage of sexual violence.

3.0 Research Methodology

This study utilized a quantitative research methodology to explore the coverage of crimes against women (CAW) by mobile journalism and its impact. A structured survey was conducted with 100 respondents to gather data on their perceptions and experiences related to mobile journalism's role in reporting CAW. The survey included five Likert scale questions designed to assess various aspects of mobile journalism in this context. The collected data were analyzed using frequency distribution to determine the prevalence of responses and identify patterns in perceptions regarding mobile journalism's effectiveness. This analysis helped in understanding how mobile journalism impacted the coverage of CAW and in drawing conclusions about its overall role and effectiveness.

4.0 Data Analysis

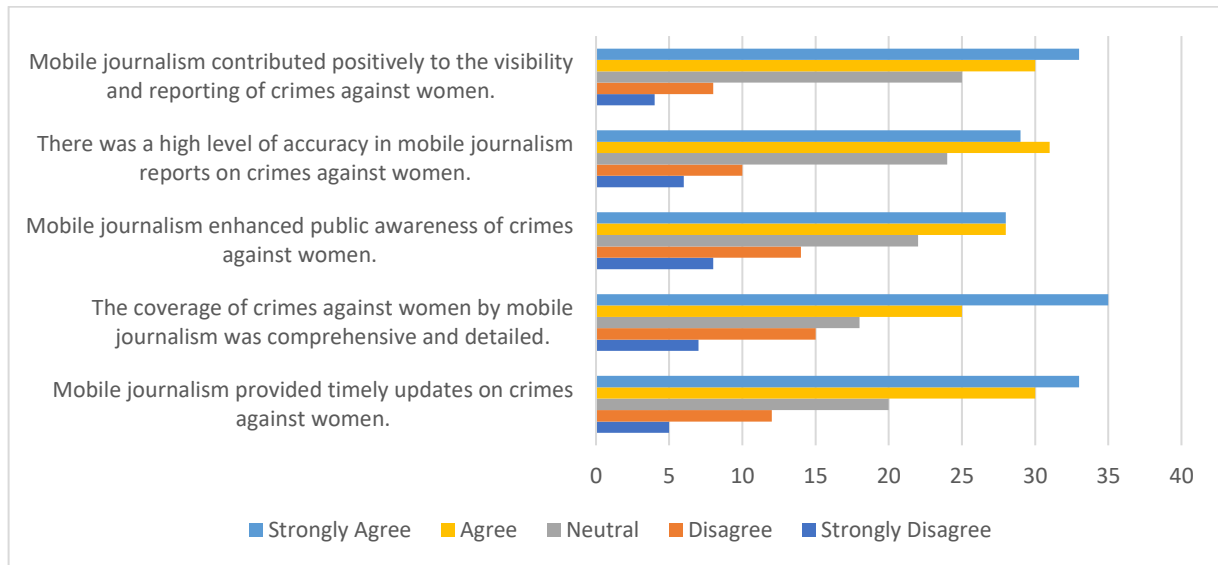


Fig 1. Representation of Survey Data

Table 4.1 Frequency Distribution of Survey responses

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Mobile journalism provided timely updates on crimes against women.	5	12	20	30	33
The coverage of crimes against women by mobile journalism was comprehensive and detailed.	7	15	18	25	35
Mobile journalism enhanced public awareness of crimes against women.	8	14	22	28	28
There was a high level of accuracy in mobile journalism reports on crimes against women.	6	10	24	31	29
Mobile journalism contributed positively to the visibility and reporting of crimes against women.	4	8	25	30	33

The survey results reveal diverse perceptions about the effectiveness of mobile journalism in covering crimes against women. A significant proportion of respondents (33%) strongly agreed that mobile journalism provided timely updates, indicating that real-time reporting is perceived as a key strength. However, opinions on the comprehensiveness of coverage were more mixed, with 35% strongly agreeing and 25% agreeing, suggesting a general but not overwhelming confidence in the depth of coverage.

Regarding the enhancement of public awareness, responses were also varied. Although 28% strongly agreed that mobile journalism enhances awareness, the neutral responses (22%) and disagreements (22%) highlight some skepticism about its effectiveness in raising awareness. Accuracy in reporting saw a high level of agreement, with 31% strongly agreeing and 29% agreeing, reflecting a positive perception of the credibility of mobile journalism. Similarly, the positive contribution of mobile journalism to visibility and reporting was well-regarded, with 33% strongly agreeing and 30% agreeing, indicating a broad acknowledgment of its role in improving coverage.

5.0 Conclusion

The study indicates that mobile journalism is generally viewed positively in terms of providing timely updates and contributing to the visibility of crimes against women. The high agreement on the accuracy of mobile journalism suggests that it is perceived as a reliable source. However, there are mixed opinions about the comprehensiveness of coverage and its effectiveness in enhancing public awareness. These findings highlight that while mobile journalism has made significant contributions to reporting on crimes against women, there is room for improvement, particularly in ensuring comprehensive and impactful coverage.

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