

**ATTITUDE OF MASS COMMUNICATION UNDERGRADUATES TOWARDS
THE USE OF MOBILE PHONES FOR NEWS REPORTING IN BENIN CITY
NIGERIA**

BY

**Aisosa Success AIYAMENKHUE
ART2100871**

**DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION
FACULTY OF ARTS
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
BENIN CITY**

OCTOBER, 2025.

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**A RESEARCH SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE
IN MASS COMMUNICATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF MASS
COMMUNICATION, FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY,
EDO STATE.**

OCTOBER, 2025.

DECLARATION

I, Aisosa success Aiyamenkhue, hereby declare that this project titled “Attitude of Mass Communication undergraduates Towards the Use of Mobile Phones for News Reporting in Benin city Nigeria" is my original work and is based on a study undertaken by me in the department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, under the supervision of Prof. F. P. Olise. All sources of information, data, and materials used in the preparation of this work have been duly acknowledged through appropriate references.

Aisosa Success AIYAMENKHUE
ART2100871

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research work was carried out by Aisosa Success AIYAMENKHUE, Matriculation Number **ART2100871** in the Department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Art, University of Benin. The work embodied in this project is original and was completed under my supervision. It is, therefore, certified as meeting the requirements for the award of the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree in Mass Communication.

Prof. F. P. Olise
Project Supervisor

Date

Dr. D. O. Ekhareafo
Head of Department

Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my heavenly father, my Lord and God Almighty who has continued to see me through in everything.

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I am deeply grateful to Almighty God for granting me the strength, wisdom, and perseverance to start and successfully complete this project. His continuous grace, protection, and unfailing love have been my greatest support throughout this journey.

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My heartfelt appreciation goes to my family, who have been my unwavering support system. To my parent, Mrs. Anthonia Aduwa my mother for her unending love, encouragement, and financial support; to my uncle's Mr. Efosa Imarhiagbe and his wife Mrs. Marian Efosa as well as Mr. Osazee Imarhiagbe and his wife Mrs. Loveth Osazee, for their love, kindness and constant support. Jennifer and Kelvin my siblings for their care, understanding, and constant support I remain truly thankful. To my dear friends Treasure and Dawn whom held me and comforted me during my times of trials and were also there to share my laughter friends who made school feel like home I love and cherish you guys always. And to Folusewa for being my friend, comforter and adviser, you were true and sweet to me at all times I'm forever grateful for the gift of you. To Jasmine a sweet soul school gave to me I love you my dear friend. To all my roommates who I laughed, screamed and cried with I love you all.

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AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the attitude of Mass Communication undergraduates at the University of Benin towards the use of mobile phones for news reporting. The research was guided by three objectives: to examine students' level of awareness, their attitudes, and the challenges they encounter in using mobile phones for journalism. Anchored on the Uses and Gratifications Theory and the Technology Acceptance Model, the study adopted the survey design. The population comprised 932 undergraduates across four levels (100 – 400), from which a sample of 300 respondents was selected. A structured questionnaire served as the instrument for data collection, and the responses were analyzed using simple percentages, frequency tables, and mean scores with a 2.50 criterion mean. The findings revealed that students possess a high level of awareness of the journalistic potential of mobile phones, recognizing their speed and ease in reporting. The results also showed a positive attitude towards mobile phone reporting, with students viewing it as credible, career-enhancing, and vital for the future of journalism. However, major challenges were identified, including high data costs, unstable electricity, poor network connectivity, lack of professional training, and credibility concerns. The study concludes that while Mass Communication students at UNIBEN are enthusiastic about mobile phone reporting, infrastructural and institutional challenges hinder full adoption. It recommends curriculum reforms, improved training, and better infrastructural support to maximize the use of mobile phones for journalism.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The evolution of journalism has undergone tremendous transformation over the past few decades, particularly due to the introduction and advancement of communication technologies. The traditional media landscape, which was once characterized by newspapers, radio, and television as the primary sources of news dissemination, has now expanded to include digital and mobile platforms that enable more immediate, interactive, and participatory forms of journalism. One such innovation is the use of mobile phones for journalism, which refers to the process of using mobile devices particularly smartphones for newsgathering, editing, and broadcasting.

In the context of Nigeria, the use of mobile phones for journalism is becoming an increasingly essential tool in media practice. Prof. Idowu Sobowale said "The internet has revolutionized journalism by changing how News is gathered, processed, and disseminated. But it also challenges traditional journalist values." He focuses on how the digital age has changed newsrooms and audience expectation, while the speed of news has increased, the accuracy, verification and gatekeeping roles of journalists are under pressure. The rapid spread of mobile technology has significantly influenced how Nigerians consume and produce information. With the advent of affordable smartphones and increasing internet penetration, citizens now have greater access to platforms for information dissemination. According to the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), over 190 million Nigerians

are mobile subscribers, and a substantial number of these individuals are youths and students. This level of mobile penetration offers a unique opportunity for the growth of mobile journalism within educational institutions, especially among students of Mass Communication.

Globally, the use of mobile phones for journalism has transformed the dynamics of content creation. Events that were once exclusively reported by trained journalists using professional-grade equipment are now being captured and shared by individuals equipped with smartphones. This shift has redefined the gatekeeping role of traditional media and has elevated the role of citizen journalists. In many developing countries, including Nigeria, the use of mobile phones for journalism has become increasingly prevalent, particularly in situations where access to conventional media infrastructure is limited.

Mass Communication students are being trained to become the future journalists, public relations professionals, broadcasters, and media scholars of the nation. Their attitudes toward the use of mobile phones for journalism are, therefore, critical to the future of media practice in Nigeria. At the University of Benin, one of the premier institutions in the country, these students are at the forefront of academic and practical engagements with journalism. Their perceptions and usage of mobile devices for journalistic purposes reflect broader trends in technological adoption and educational preparedness for the digital media landscape.

In line with global trends, Asemah (2011) posits that journalism practice in Nigeria must adapt to the changing technological environment. He emphasizes the importance of media practitioners being able to operate digital devices and utilize online platforms for

effective news dissemination. The integration of the use of mobile phones for journalism in journalism training is no longer optional but essential for preparing students for the contemporary media environment.

The traditional boundaries between reporters, audiences, and publishers are gradually dissolving. The use of mobile phones for journalism stands at the intersection of these changes, offering a bridge between conventional and new-age reporting. It empowers individuals, especially students, to cover live events, conduct interviews, and publish content in real-time without waiting for traditional newsroom processes.

However, the incorporation of the use of mobile phones for journalism into journalism education has been inconsistent across Nigerian universities. As noted by Nwodu (2006), there exists a significant gap between media training and industry practice. While some institutions have started integrating digital skills into their curricula, many still rely heavily on traditional teaching methods that do not adequately prepare students for the dynamic nature of digital media.

Infrastructural challenges such as erratic power supply, high data costs, and inadequate access to training equipment limit students' ability to effectively engage in the use of mobile phones for journalism. Students may own smartphones but lack the technical knowledge and institutional support to use them for journalistic purposes. Furthermore, cultural perceptions about professionalism and credibility in journalism can influence students' attitudes toward using mobile phones as primary tools for reporting. As Udejah (2004) highlights, societal

norms and institutional expectations play a crucial role in shaping how technologies are adopted in professional contexts.

The use of mobile phones for journalism also aligns with participatory communication models that prioritize inclusiveness and audience engagement. The theory of uses and gratifications, for example, emphasizes the active role of audiences in selecting media content that meets their needs. Mobile Journalism exemplifies this by allowing content creators, including students, to tailor news content to their audience preferences. It thus facilitates two-way communication, feedback, and engagement, which are essential components of modern journalism.

Furthermore, the use of mobile phones for journalism offers the advantage of cost-effectiveness, speed, and flexibility. Unlike traditional news production, which requires expensive cameras, editing suites, and broadcasting studios, the use of mobile phones for journalism leverages readily available technology. This has opened up opportunities for students, freelance journalists, and citizen reporters to participate in the media space without heavy financial investment.

Despite these advantages, the perception and practical application of the use of mobile phones for journalism among university students remain under-explored. Many students might see their phones primarily as tools for communication, entertainment, and social networking rather than as powerful tools for journalistic inquiry. This mindset can be attributed to inadequate orientation, lack of exposure, and insufficient integration of the use of mobile phones for journalism into the media curriculum.

Another important point is the increasing relevance of the use of mobile phones for journalism in conflict and crisis reporting. In environments where access to professional equipment and newsrooms is limited such as during protests, insurgencies, or natural disasters the use of mobile phones for journalism becomes a critical method for real-time reporting. Nigerian students, especially those in volatile regions, can play a significant role in capturing and disseminating information that might otherwise go unreported. This has implications for national development, democracy, and social justice.

The use of mobile phones for journalism also complements the entrepreneurial turn in journalism practice. As traditional media houses cut down on staff and operational budgets, students can harness the use of mobile phones for journalism to create independent platforms. This shift toward media entrepreneurship is increasingly being advocated by scholars like Okunna (2002), who stress the need for self-reliance and innovation among emerging journalists.

Moreover, the use of mobile phones for journalism offers a platform for diversity in voices and content. Marginalized groups and underrepresented communities can tell their own stories without reliance on mainstream media. This democratization of content creation is particularly important in a diverse society like Nigeria where multiple ethnic, cultural, and linguistic groups coexist. Students who are exposed to the use of mobile phones for journalism early on can serve as community reporters, amplifying grassroots issues and promoting inclusion.

The use of mobile phones for journalism also plays a crucial role in redefining the ethical framework of journalism. It challenges traditional notions of news accuracy, verification, and objectivity, especially in user-generated content. Mass Communication students need to understand and navigate these ethical dilemmas, ensuring their content upholds the integrity of journalism. Training in this area is paramount. According to Ekwuazi (2013), ethics and professionalism must guide the integration of new technologies in media practice, including the use of mobile phones for journalism.

There is also a pedagogical dimension to the use of mobile phones for journalism. Its use in classroom instruction and field assignments enables hands-on learning, critical thinking, and innovation. It encourages collaborative storytelling, multimedia integration, and real-time reporting projects, fostering experiential learning. Oso (2012) suggests that journalism education should be rooted in contemporary practice that emphasizes creativity, technological proficiency, and problem-solving. The use of mobile phones for journalism fits this model perfectly.

Additionally, the use of mobile phones for journalism reflects the globalization of media. Students can connect with international audiences, share local stories globally, and participate in global discourses. This connectivity enhances media literacy, intercultural communication, and global citizenship. With appropriate institutional support, Nigerian students can leverage the use of mobile phones for journalism to build transnational media portfolios, collaborate with peers abroad, and even pursue digital journalism careers internationally.

This study seeks to investigate the level of awareness, attitudes, usage patterns, and challenges associated with the use of mobile phones for journalism among undergraduate students of Mass Communication at the University of Benin. It aims to contribute to academic discourse, curriculum development, and policy formulation in the area of digital media training.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The advent of the use of mobile phones for journalism has presented a paradigm shift in media production, especially in terms of how news is gathered, processed, and disseminated. With the widespread availability of smartphones and mobile internet, the practice of journalism is no longer confined to traditional media houses. Instead, it has become more democratized, allowing individuals especially students and young people to act as news reporters and content creators. However, despite the global embrace of this innovative approach to journalism, its adoption and application among Nigerian Mass Communication students remain inconsistent and underdeveloped.

At the University of Benin, there is growing curiosity among Mass Communication undergraduates about the potential of the use of mobile phones for journalism. However, anecdotal evidence and preliminary observations suggest that the actual utilization of mobile phones for serious journalistic tasks is limited. Many students appear to use mobile phones primarily for social interaction, entertainment, and casual content sharing, with minimal use for structured news reporting. This raises important questions about the level of awareness, orientation, training, and motivation students receive in this regard.

One critical problem lies in the gap between curriculum content and the practical realities of the modern media environment. As Nwodu (2006) notes, journalism education in Nigeria often struggles to keep pace with technological advancements. If students are not being taught how to use mobile devices effectively for news gathering and dissemination, they may graduate without the essential digital competencies required by the industry. Furthermore, Asemah (2011) argues that a mismatch between educational training and industry needs leads to the production of half-baked graduates who are ill-equipped for the media workforce.

Another pressing issue is the perception of professionalism in journalism. Many students believe that credible journalism must involve bulky cameras, editing suites, and formal newsroom settings. This perception undermines the legitimacy of mobile journalism and discourages students from embracing it as a serious journalistic tool. Additionally, the lack of institutional support, such as training workshops, digital equipment, and mentorship in the use of mobile phones for journalism, further hampers its development among undergraduates.

Moreover, there is a limited understanding of the ethical and legal implications of the use of mobile phones for journalism. Students often engage in content creation without being fully aware of issues such as libel, privacy rights, content verification, and responsible reporting. This creates a risk of misinformation, which can damage public trust in emerging media platforms. As Ekwuazi (2013) highlights, without a strong ethical foundation, the use of modern media tools can contribute more to public confusion than enlightenment.

Another problem is the lack of empirical studies that focus exclusively on the use of mobile phones for journalism among university students in Nigeria. Most existing literature tends to focus on the broader use of digital technology in journalism without narrowing down on how students in specific institutions, like the University of Benin, perceive and utilize mobile phones for journalism. This gap in literature makes it difficult to design targeted interventions that would encourage the use of mobile phones for journalism adoption and skill acquisition.

Given these observations, this study aims to critically investigate the attitude of Mass Communication undergraduates at the University of Benin toward the use of mobile phones for news reporting. It seeks to identify the factors influencing their perceptions, their actual usage patterns, the challenges they face, and the institutional and curricular structures that affect their engagement with the use of mobile phones for journalism.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study were to;

1. Ascertain the level of awareness of Mass Communication undergraduates at the University of Benin towards the use of mobile phones for news reporting.
2. Find out the attitude of Mass Communication undergraduates at the University of Benin towards the use of mobile phones for news reporting.
3. Challenges (if any) as perceived by mass communication in the use of mobile phones for reporting.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions guiding this study:

1. What is the level of awareness of Mass Communication undergraduates at the University of Benin towards the use of mobile phones for news reporting?
2. What is the attitude of Mass Communication undergraduates at the University of Benin towards the use of mobile phones for news reporting?
3. What challenges (if any) do they encounter in the process?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it explores how undergraduate Mass Communication students at the University of Benin are adapting to the use of mobile phones for journalism. As the media landscape shifts toward digital and mobile platforms, it is important to understand how future journalists are engaging with these tools.

Firstly, the study would help to reveal the level of awareness and interest students have in using their mobile phones for journalistic purposes such as news gathering, reporting, editing, and publishing. It would also provide insight into how students perceive the relevance and credibility of mobile phones as professional journalism tools.

Secondly, the study would identify common challenges that hinder students from fully utilizing their mobile phones for journalism. These may include issues such as lack of technical skills, inadequate training, poor internet access, limited data, power supply issues,

or lack of institutional encouragement. By bringing these challenges to light, the research can guide educational institutions and media stakeholders in developing support systems to improve digital journalism training.

Thirdly, the findings of this research would be useful for lecturers, curriculum planners, and media trainers. It would help them recognize gaps in journalism education and inspire changes to the curriculum to reflect the realities of digital media practice. This may include introducing practical courses on mobile content creation, digital storytelling, and mobile video editing.

Fourthly, the study would benefit students directly by raising awareness about how their mobile phones can serve not just for entertainment or social interaction, but also as powerful tools for professional news reporting. It will encourage them to take advantage of accessible technology and prepare themselves for the demands of the evolving media industry.

Additionally, media organizations can benefit by gaining insight into the readiness of upcoming journalists to function in a mobile-first newsroom. Understanding students' skills and attitudes can inform recruitment strategies and training programs for new entrants into the profession.

Lastly, this study contributes to national development by promoting a culture of participatory journalism. When students are empowered to report accurately and ethically using mobile devices, it enhances access to information, transparency, and democratic communication. This has long-term implications for civic engagement and the strengthening of Nigeria's media system.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study is specifically focused on examining the attitudes of undergraduate students of Mass Communication department of the University of Benin.

The scope of the study is limited to students in the 100 to 400 level during the 2024/2025 academic session. It investigates their perceptions, frequency of use, purposes, and challenges related to the use of mobile phones for news reporting activities. The study seeks to understand how these students utilise mobile devices in carrying out key journalism functions such as news gathering, recording, writing, editing, and dissemination of news content, especially through social media and online platforms.

The research does not extend to postgraduate students, Mass Communication lecturers, or students of other disciplines. It also does not explore other mobile technologies outside of mobile phones, nor does it consider the use of mobile phones for general academic or personal communication unrelated to news reporting.

By narrowing the scope in this way, the study aims to produce focused, relevant, and practical findings that can help improve journalism education and mobile reporting practices among future media professionals in Benin City.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

The major limitations encountered by the researcher was that the research only focuses on Mass communication undergraduates of the University of Benin. Another restraint in this study was the administration and gathering of questionnaire, data collection relied heavily on self-administered questionnaire, some respondents had reservations in filling out the questionnaire due different reasons. Some were reluctant while others asked for monetary compensation before they could fill out the questionnaire the researcher had to make a strong and passionate appeal to the respondent before they cooperated.

Also, accessing recent online materials related to this study was not easy as only few were available. Even more so a study of this nature requires other research Instrument such as interviews and observation so as to generate an integral view of the research that would help the study to be more easily applicable whenever it is being needed in practical cases.

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms.

Attitude: Attitude refers to the students' mental disposition, including their feelings, beliefs, and behavioral tendencies, towards the use of mobile phones for news reporting.

Challenges: Challenges in this study refer to the barriers or difficulties Mass Communication students encounter when using mobile phones for journalistic purposes, such as technical limitations, lack of training, or infrastructural issues.

Mobile Journalism: This refers to the practice of using mobile devices, especially smartphones, to gather, edit, and disseminate news content. It involves the use of mobile

technology for professional journalistic purposes, including reporting live events, taking photographs, recording interviews, and publishing news stories.

Mass Communication Students: These are undergraduates enrolled in the Department of Mass Communication at the University of Benin who are being trained in various fields of media, including journalism, broadcasting, advertising, and public relations.

Mobile Phones: For the purpose of this study, mobile phones refer specifically to smartphones with capabilities such as internet access, high-quality cameras, audio recording, video editing, and various applications that enable professional news production.

News Reporting: News reporting is the act of gathering, processing, and presenting factual information about events to the public through various media channels. In this study, it specifically refers to reporting activities performed using mobile phones.

Nigeria: Nigeria is a West African country located on the Gulf of Guinea, known as the most populous nation in Africa and characterized by its diverse ethnic groups, languages, and rich cultural heritage.

University of Benin (UNIBEN): This is a federal university located in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria, known for its academic excellence in diverse disciplines including Mass Communication.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Preamble

This chapter presents the literature review of the study under the following subheading:

2.1 Conceptual Clarification

2.2. Mobile phone For Phone Reporting

2.3. Use of Mobile Phones For News Reporting Among Students

2.4. Challenges Of Using Mobile Phones For Journalism

2.5. Review of Empirical studies

2.6 Theoretical Framework

2.1 Conceptual Clarification

News Reporting: News reporting is an essential component of journalism that involves the collection, investigation, analysis, and dissemination of current and factual information to the public. It is a process where journalists select, verify, and present information about events, issues, and developments in society. According to McQuail (2010), news reporting is a professional activity that ensures communication of accurate and timely information to the public. Harcup and O'Neill (2001) describe news reporting as the means by which journalism

fulfills its core social responsibility: to inform and engage society by telling stories that matter.

In Nigeria, Oso (2015) defines news reporting as the systematic gathering, evaluation, and presentation of news items that reflect the political, economic, social, and cultural realities of society. According to Oso, news reporting in Nigeria is crucial for creating awareness and building a more informed society. Similarly, Aliede (2009) highlights the role of news reporting in providing a platform for public debate and holding those in power accountable.

With the growing influence of technology, particularly mobile phones and the internet, news reporting has evolved into a more dynamic and immediate activity. Journalists can now report breaking news in real-time, and with mobile phones, news can be gathered and disseminated from virtually anywhere. This transformation has made news reporting more accessible, particularly in regions with limited access to traditional media.

Reasons for News Reporting: The primary goal of news reporting is to inform the public. Through timely and accurate reports, journalists help society stay updated on issues, events, and developments both locally and globally. In a country like Nigeria, where political and social challenges often dominate public life, news reporting becomes even more critical for the public's understanding of governance, policy changes, and societal needs.

According to Edegoh et al. (2014), news reporting in Nigeria serves as an essential tool for educating the public about government policies, health issues, economic reforms, and other important topics. It provides citizens with the information they need to participate

meaningfully in discussions about their rights and responsibilities. Through thorough and accurate reporting, journalists can foster transparency and give the public the knowledge necessary to demand accountability from leaders and institutions.

Another reason news reporting is essential is its role in shaping public opinion. The way stories are reported influences how people perceive events. Journalists can highlight important issues, provide context, and challenge narratives that may otherwise go unexamined. Nigerian scholars, such as Nwabueze (2016), argue that news reporting plays an influential role in framing the national agenda and guiding public discourse, particularly in a diverse country like Nigeria, where different ethnic and religious groups often have varying views on issues.

Importance of News Reporting: News reporting holds a central position in any democracy, including Nigeria, because it ensures that citizens are well-informed and able to make decisions based on facts. A healthy democracy relies on the free flow of information, and news reporting is a cornerstone of this process. For example, in Nigeria, journalists play an essential role in reporting on elections, political developments, and issues affecting national security. As Oso (2015) notes, news reporting provides the electorate with information that helps them make informed voting decisions and hold their leaders accountable.

Moreover, news reporting is vital for public awareness and social change. In Nigeria, where issues such as health crises, corruption, and economic hardship are prevalent, the role of journalists in bringing these matters to light cannot be overstated. According to Nwabueze (2016), investigative journalism is crucial in the Nigerian context, where news reporting has

the potential to expose corruption, inequality, and governmental negligence, thus encouraging public demand for justice and reform.

News reporting also serves as a historical record. The archives of Nigerian newspapers and news outlets act as resources that document the nation's past, preserving important events for future generations. In Nigeria, where national history is rich with political struggles, social changes, and movements for justice, news reporting helps shape how future generations understand and interpret their collective history. As emphasized by Aliede (2009), news reporting creates a narrative that allows individuals to reflect on their past and contribute to discussions about the future.

Mobile Phones for News Reporting: The use of mobile phones for news reporting has significantly transformed journalism in the 21st century, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria. As portable, affordable, and multifunctional tools, mobile phones have enabled both professional journalists and citizen reporters to gather, produce, and disseminate news in real time. This development marks a shift from the traditional newsroom-based model of journalism to a more decentralized, accessible, and flexible approach to news reporting.

Mobile phones, especially smartphones, combine audio-visual recording, internet access, and social media integration, making them powerful tools for modern journalism. News reporters can now take photos, record videos, write stories, conduct interviews, and publish content directly from the field without returning to a newsroom. This immediacy enhances the speed and responsiveness of news coverage.

According to Bowman and Willis (2003), mobile devices have given rise to what they describe as “participatory journalism,” where audiences are no longer passive consumers but active contributors to news production. In the Nigerian context, this transformation is even more pronounced due to the widespread ownership of mobile phones and the growing access to mobile internet services.

Burum 2016 observes that mobile phones have democratized news reporting in Nigeria by lowering the barriers to entry for news gathering and dissemination. This democratization means that even student journalists and campus reporters can participate in professional-grade reporting with little more than a smartphone.

Furthermore, Olorunnisola and Douai (2013) note that mobile phones have helped bridge the urban-rural communication divide in Nigeria. Reporters based in remote or underserved areas can now report breaking news and community stories in real time, thereby expanding the reach of the media. This is especially important in a country like Nigeria, where infrastructural challenges have historically hindered timely and inclusive news coverage.

In the realm of academic media studies, scholars like Okoro and Diri (2016) have examined how mobile phone technology is reshaping journalism curricula and practices in Nigerian universities. Their studies show that journalism students who are trained in mobile-based reporting are more agile, digitally savvy, and better prepared for the realities of a modern newsroom environment.

Despite its many advantages, the use of mobile phones for news reporting also presents challenges. Issues such as information accuracy, ethical standards, and the credibility of sources become more critical in a mobile-driven media environment. Nigerian media scholars like Edeani (2011) warn that while mobile phones enhance speed, they also increase the risk of misinformation if not carefully regulated. Therefore, it is vital that users, especially journalism students, are equipped with the ethical and professional training required to use mobile phones responsibly for news purposes.

Moreover, scholars have noted the blurred line between professional journalism and citizen reporting caused by mobile phone usage. As anyone with a smartphone can record and share news content, maintaining journalistic standards has become increasingly complex. In this context, the role of journalism education becomes paramount in teaching students how to verify information, maintain objectivity, and uphold professional values even when using mobile technology.

2.2. Use of Mobile Phones for News Reporting among Students

The use of mobile phones for news reporting by students has significantly transformed the landscape of journalism education and practice. Over the past two decades, technological advancements have turned mobile phones from mere communication devices into powerful tools for content creation, distribution, and media engagement. This transformation has particularly empowered student journalists, who often operate with limited resources but high curiosity and adaptability.

Historically, journalism students were restricted to pen and paper or had to rely on access to institutional broadcasting equipment and professional cameras to fulfill their academic and practical assignments. This limited their ability to report events in real time or participate fully in dynamic media environments. The evolution of mobile technology, especially the smartphone, has bridged this gap, offering students access to affordable, multifunctional devices that combine cameras, audio recorders, notepads, and internet access in a single handheld tool.

According to Oyero (2017), mobile phones have introduced new dimensions to journalism training, making it more interactive, immediate, and practical. Students can now cover breaking news, record interviews, take high-resolution photos, and edit and publish their reports all from a single device. This democratization of journalism tools fosters early exposure to professional routines and enhances experiential learning.

In Nigeria, where infrastructural limitations can sometimes hinder traditional media practices, the mobile phone has emerged as a practical solution. Nwabueze (2014) argues that Nigerian Mass Communication students are increasingly using mobile phones to meet academic demands and engage with real-world journalism. From campus events and student protests to community development stories, mobile phones allow student reporters to capture the pulse of their environment in a timely and convenient manner.

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter) serve as immediate distribution channels, enabling students to publish and receive feedback on their reports instantly. Mobile apps like Canva, InShot, and Adobe Spark also allow students to

enhance the visual appeal of their news content. This ease of use promotes creativity, innovation, and a deeper understanding of multimedia storytelling.

However, the rise of mobile phone-based news reporting among students is not without challenges. Issues such as poor data access, limited training in mobile journalism techniques, and ethical concerns around misinformation and privacy must be addressed. As Asemah (2011) points out, while mobile tools enhance access to journalism practice, proper orientation on professional standards is essential to avoid abuses and maintain credibility.

In Benin City, where universities like the University of Benin and Benson Idahosa University train future journalists, many students are already applying these tools in both academic and extracurricular reporting. Mobile phones enable them to report news from the field, conduct interviews off-campus, and contribute to campus publications or media blogs, making journalism more inclusive and participatory.

Mobile phones have revolutionized news reporting for students, offering them not only the means to gather and disseminate information but also the opportunity to grow into responsible, tech-savvy journalists. With proper training and ethical guidance, student reporters can harness mobile technology to tell impactful stories and prepare for the demands of a rapidly evolving media industry.

2.3 Challenge of Using Mobile Phones for Journalism

Despite the increasing popularity of mobile phones among Mass Communication students for news reporting, several challenges continue to hinder their effective use. One significant issue is the limitation of technical quality. While smartphones offer convenience, their audio and video outputs often fall short of professional broadcast standards, especially in noisy or poorly lit environments. Additionally, students may lack access to advanced editing apps or the skills needed to produce high-quality multimedia content. These limitations can affect the credibility and professionalism of their work, especially when compared to traditional reporting tools. Furthermore, frequent software glitches, limited battery life, and insufficient storage capacity can disrupt the news-gathering process, particularly during long or unpredictable field assignments.

Another major challenge is related to internet connectivity and data affordability. In many parts of Nigeria, including Benin City, students often struggle with poor network signals and high costs of mobile data, making it difficult to upload large media files or live-stream events. Ethical and safety concerns also present challenges, as students may not be trained in journalistic ethics, leading to risks such as invasion of privacy or misinformation. Additionally, mobile phone reporting can expose students to harassment or threats, especially when covering politically sensitive or controversial stories. These factors collectively limit the consistency, reach, and impact of mobile phone journalism among student reporters, despite its potential to democratise the practice of news gathering.

2.4. Review of Empirical Studies:

A number of researchers have conducted empirical investigations into the use of mobile phones and digital technology for journalism and news reporting in Nigeria. This section reviews relevant empirical studies that directly inform the present research. The works reviewed are: Edewor and Obukoadata (2021), Adesina (2019), Ekwueme and Okoro (2018), Okoro and Ugwu (2017), and Olatunji (2016).

Edewor and Obukoadata (2021) carried out a study on students' perception of mobile phones for news gathering and dissemination. Their work was anchored on the idea that students are not only passive consumers of news but also emerging content producers in the digital ecosystem. Using a quantitative survey design, they distributed structured questionnaires to undergraduates across selected universities in Southern Nigeria. The study revealed that a large percentage of students actively used mobile phones for news gathering, story sharing, and social media journalism. Mobile phones were considered essential because of their affordability, portability, and ability to break down barriers of time and space. However, the researchers observed that while students embraced mobile phones as journalistic tools, problems such as poor network service, high data costs, and lack of professional training limited the reliability and credibility of the reports produced. This finding is significant to the present study, as it emphasizes both the opportunities and weaknesses of mobile news reporting among students, thereby providing insight into the level of awareness and challenges undergraduates at UNIBEN may face.

Adesina (2019) investigated digital literacy and journalism practice among Nigerian undergraduates. The study aimed to determine whether students had the necessary digital literacy skills to effectively use mobile phones for professional journalism. Using a descriptive survey design, the research sampled mass communication students from three universities in Southwest Nigeria. The findings revealed that most undergraduates were comfortable using social media, mobile applications, and online platforms to create and distribute content. However, their digital literacy was often limited to surface-level knowledge such as uploading stories or taking pictures, with fewer students demonstrating deeper skills like fact-checking, editing, or verifying online sources. The study concluded that digital literacy is central to shaping students' attitudes toward mobile journalism, as students with higher digital competence were more confident and ethical in their news reporting practices. For the present research, this is crucial because it highlights that awareness alone is not enough; competence in digital literacy determines whether students can successfully transform mobile phones into credible journalism tools.

Ekwueme and Okoro (2018) explored mobile journalism in Nigeria, paying close attention to its advantages and constraints. The study was conducted through focus group discussions with mass communication students and survey responses from young practicing journalists. The findings showed that mobile journalism was widely embraced for its speed, flexibility, and ability to capture breaking news with minimal resources. Students reported that mobile phones made it possible to report live events without waiting for traditional newsrooms or bulky equipment. Nevertheless, the study revealed challenges such as lack of formal training, unreliable internet service, and poor technical support, which often reduced

the quality of reports. The authors concluded that mobile journalism in Nigeria is a powerful tool for widening participation in news production, but its effectiveness is largely determined by the availability of supportive infrastructure and institutional backing. This study is relevant to the present research because it highlights the dual reality of mobile journalism while it opens opportunities for students, it also exposes them to systemic challenges that directly affect their perception and usage.

Okoro and Ugwu (2017) examined digital technology and the practice of journalism in Nigeria. Their study adopted a mixed-method design, combining surveys and in-depth interviews with both undergraduates and professional journalists. The findings indicated that mobile phones have significantly transformed journalism practice, reducing barriers to entry and allowing undergraduates to engage in news reporting alongside professionals. Respondents noted that mobile devices allowed for greater immediacy in covering events and offered multiple platforms (such as blogs, Twitter, and WhatsApp) for distribution. However, ethical issues such as fake news, copyright violations, and lack of editorial gatekeeping were repeatedly identified as challenges. The authors stressed that while digital technology empowers students to act as citizen journalists, it also exposes them to the dangers of misinformation and ethical breaches. This is particularly important for the present study, as it emphasizes that students' attitudes towards mobile journalism are influenced not only by technical convenience but also by broader ethical considerations.

Olatunji (2016) investigated the use of mobile phones as tools for news reporting among Nigerian journalism students. The research adopted a survey approach across selected universities and polytechnics in Nigeria. Findings revealed that students regularly used

mobile phones to cover events within and outside campus, conduct interviews, and upload reports on social media. Many students expressed enthusiasm for the use of mobile phones in news reporting, seeing it as a cost-effective and empowering alternative to traditional reporting methods. However, the study also revealed weaknesses such as lack of professional guidance, insufficient training in mobile journalism, and the tendency for reports to lack depth or balance. Olatunji concluded that while students are eager to embrace mobile journalism, institutions must provide structured training and curriculum integration to strengthen their capacity. This study is directly linked to the present research as it reflects the same population group journalism undergraduates demonstrating how mobile phones have already become embedded in their news reporting practices guidance, insufficient training in mobile journalism, and the tendency for reports to lack depth or balance. Olatunji concluded that while students are eager to embrace mobile journalism, institutions must provide structured training and curriculum integration to strengthen their capacity. This study is directly linked to the present research as it reflects the same population group journalism undergraduates demonstrating how mobile phones have already become embedded in their news reporting practices.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the tenets of; Technological Determinism Theory and Uses and Gratifications Theory.

Technological determinism theory

This theory was developed by Marshall McLuhan, a Canadian media theorist, in the 1960s. It posits that technology, particularly new communication tools, is the primary driver of societal change. According to McLuhan, technology is not just a support for human activity, but a force that shapes human behavior, thinking, and interaction. He famously asserted that "the medium is the message," suggesting that the nature of the medium itself not just the content it carries has a profound influence on society.

In the context of this research, technological determinism implies that the rise of mobile phones especially smartphones has redefined the nature of journalism and news reporting. The ability to capture, edit, and disseminate information instantly through a mobile phone has transformed the traditional processes of news gathering and distribution. For Mass Communication undergraduates, mobile phones are not merely tools; they have become essential instruments that enable them to function as modern-day journalists. Through mobile phones, students can document breaking news, conduct interviews, and upload reports directly to digital platforms. The widespread use of mobile phones is thus influencing journalism education, professional expectations, and audience consumption patterns.

The theory suggests that students' attitude toward news reporting using mobile phones is shaped by the transformative power of these tools. They are no longer bound by legacy journalism equipment like broadcast cameras and field recorders. News can be captured in real-time and broadcast instantly to a global audience via social media. Thus, the medium (mobile phone) has redefined the message (news content) and the messenger (the student journalist).

This theory helps explain how the availability and advancement of mobile technology are shaping the behavior of students who are immersed in a media-rich environment. Their dependence on mobile devices for academic and journalistic purposes illustrates how technology determines not just tools of engagement, but also the trajectory of communication itself.

▪ **Uses and Gratifications Theory**

Developed in the 1970s by Blumler and Katz, the Uses and Gratifications Theory shifts the focus from what media do to people to what people do with media. This theory is grounded in the idea that media users are active participants who deliberately choose specific media and technologies to satisfy their personal and social needs.

Key Gratifications Identified:

- Information (staying updated on current events)
- Personal identity (reinforcing personal values and self-understanding)
- Integration and social interaction (connecting with others)

- Entertainment (diversion, relaxation, and emotional release)

This theory is particularly applicable to this study because it explains why Mass Communication students use mobile phones for news reporting. Students may find that mobile phones gratify their need for immediacy, real-time updates, ease of use, and low cost. The portability of mobile phones allows students to act as on-the-spot reporters, while the internet connectivity embedded in these devices enables them to upload content directly to blogs, websites, or social media platforms. The theory underscores the motivations behind student behavior, showing that their adoption of mobile phone technology is purposeful and driven by specific journalistic goals.

Additionally, mobile phones also fulfill social gratifications, such as peer recognition and public validation when news content receives likes, shares, or comments. As media consumers and producers, students balance their roles and use mobile phones to create content that appeals to both academic and public audiences.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methodology under the following subheading:

Preamble

3.1. Research Design

3.2. Population of the Study

3.3. Sample Size

3.4. Sampling Technique

3.5. Research Instrument

3.6. Method of administration of research Instrument

3.7. Validity of the Instrument

3.8. Reliability of the Instrument

3.9. Method of Data Collection

3.10. Method of Data Analysis

3.1. Research Design

This study adopted the survey research design. This design was deemed appropriate because it allows for the collection of data from a large population using questionnaires. The research design focuses on people and the vital parts of people, the beliefs opinions attitudes, motivations and behavioural opinions. Survey research is the most suitable and widely used approach in social and communication research where the goal is to collect standardized information from a large group of respondents within a defined population in this case the study sought to gather quantifiable information regarding the attitudes and practices of mass communication undergraduates in Benin city toward the use of mobile phones for news reporting. The survey design supports the use of descriptive statistics for analysis, making it suitable for identifying trends and drawing generalizations accurately and reflecting the broader opinions and experience of the target population.

3.2. Population of the Study

The population of the study was 932.

This figure constitutes all the undergraduates in University of Benin, Department of Mass Communication. This figure was derived from the total number of all full time students for the 2024/2025 academic session. It comprises of the following:

100 level- 239

200 level-258

300 level-240

400 level-195

Population according to Asemah (2010) refers "to the entire group of people events or objects that possess the characteristics from which a researcher intends to draw a sample and make generalizations." Population is the totality of all elements or subjects that share common attributes and are relevant to a particular study.

3.3. Sample Size

The sample size of this study was 300 Mass Communication undergraduates of the University of Benin, representing about 32% of the entire population of 932 students. The justification for using 300 respondents is based on the criterion propounded by Nwanna (1981) in Okoro (2001) which states that, if a population is a few hundreds, a sample size of 50 or more will suffice; if the population is a few thousands, a sample size of about 5–10% will do; while for populations in several thousands, a smaller fraction may be used. Since the population of this study falls within a few hundreds, a sample size between 200 and 400 is considered adequate. Thus, a sample size of 300 was judged appropriate for this study.

3.4 Sampling Technique

This study adopted the stratified random sampling technique alongside the simple random sampling technique to ensure fair and unbiased representation of respondents. Stratified random sampling was necessary because the population of Mass Communication undergraduates in the University of Benin is already divided into four strata based on academic levels (100, 200, 300, and 400 levels).

After stratification the simple random Sampling method was applied within each level giving every student an equal chance of selection. This combination was chosen to minimise bias, enhance the validity of the findings by ensuring that the sample fairly mirrored the entire student population therefore improving the reliability and generalizability of the study results.

3.5 Instruments for Data Collections

The primary instrument used for data collection in this study was a structured questionnaire which was designed in relation and to answer the three research questions posed for this study. The questionnaire was designed with multi choice format and the 4 point likert scale of Strongly Agree(SA), Agree(A), Disagree(D), and Strongly Disagree(SD). The questionnaire was designed into 5 sections A-D. Section A focuses on the demographic information of the respondents. Section B examined the awareness and use of mobile phone for news reporting. Section C investigated student's attitude towards mobile phone journalism. Section D explored the challenges of using mobile phones for news reporting.

3.6. Method of Administration of Research Instrument

The Instrument for this study was administered to 300 students of the University of Benin which consisted of all full time undergraduate levels in the Mass Communication department. The distribution was carried out across the four academic levels of mass communication.

In line with the proportion of respondents allotted to each level 300 copies were distributed 77 to 100 level students, 83 to 200 level students, 77 to 300 level students and 63 to 400 level students.

The administration process lasted for two weeks to allow adequate time for distribution and retrieval. The researcher with aid of a research assistants were guided by ethical considerations, such as ensuring voluntary participation and confidentiality of responses. In effect, majority of the questionnaires were retrieved successful which provided sufficient data for analysis.

3.7. Validity of Research Instrument

The questionnaire was carefully designed and examined to ensure it aligns with the study objectives and research questions. To establish content validity the draft questionnaire was presented to the project supervisor, the supervisor confirmed that the items were appropriate and capable of eliciting the required information and data for the study.

3.8. Method of Data Collection

The instrument of this study was questionnaire which was administered personally by the researcher and an assistant. A total of 300 questionnaire were produced and distributed across the 4 levels of the mass communication department. The questionnaire were collected on the spot which enabled retrieved the entire questionnaire administered. It also enabled the researcher provide clarity on certain issues relating to the questionnaire that the respondent did not understand.

3.9. Method of Data Analysis

The data collected through the questionnaire were analysed using simple percentage and frequency tables. Frequency tables were used to organise responses clearly while percentage helped to show the proportion of respondents for each option in a mathematical order. This method was chosen because it is simple, easy to interpret and suitable for descriptive studies. The criterion mean for this study was 2.50.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Preamble

This chapter presents, analyses, interpret the data collected through the questionnaire administered to 300 mass communication undergraduates of the University of Benin. The first section of data analysis is the grouping of data according to items in the Instrument using frequency table and simple percentage. The second section discussed the findings of the study based on the research questions posed for this study. It is important to state that that the entire 300 questionnaire was retrieved. Thus 100% return rate and analysis is been used for this study.

4.1 Data Presentation and Analysis of Questionnaire Based on the Demographics of The Respondents in The Mass Communication Department of Uniben.

SECTION A DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Table 1: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender of Respondents	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response (%)
Male	103	34.3
Female	197	65.7
Total	300	100

Source: field survey, 2025

Table 1 shows 103(34.3%) of the respondents were males and 197(65.7%) were females. The greater percentage of the sample is female.

Table 2: Age Distribution

Age Range	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response (%)
16-20	81	27.0
21-25	202	67.3
26-30	17	5.7
Above 30	0	0
Total	300	100

Source: field survey, 2025

Table 2 shows 81 (27%) are within 16-20 age bracket, while 17 (5.7) are within the range of 26-30. The majority of undergraduates students respondents 202 (67.3%) fall within the 21-25 age group which represents the dominant age bracket of undergraduates students in the Mass communication department in UNIBEN.

Table 3: level of study

Level of Study	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response (%)
100 level	77	25.7
200 level	83	27.6
300 level	77	25.7
400 level	63	21.0
Total	300	100

Source: Field survey, 2025

The table reveals the highest number of respondents were in 200 level (27.6%) followed closely by 100 level (25.7%) and 300 level (25.7%). The least number of respondents were from 400 level having (21%) of the response percentage.

Table 4: Marital Status of Respondents

Marital status	Frequency of Response	Percentage of Response (%)
Single	299	99.7%
Married	1	0.3
Divorced	0	0
Total	300	100

Source: field survey, 2025

The table presented that the majority (99.7%) of respondents were single, while only one respondent (0.3) is married. This reflects the typical demographic composition of undergraduates in mass communication department are predominantly single.

4.2 Data presentation and analysis of questionnaire based on the awareness of mobile phones for news reporting by undergraduates in mass communication department in Uniben.

TABLE 5: Awareness of Undergraduates Towards the use of Mobile Phones for News Reporting.

Item	Awareness	S A	A	D	SD	Total	X	Decision
1	I am aware that mobile phones can be used for news reporting.	160(53.3%)	100(33.3%)	30(10.0)	10(3.3%)	300	3.37	Accepted
2	Mobile phones make news reporting easier and faster	140(46.7%)	120(40.0%)	25(8.3%)	15(5.0%)	300	3.28	Accepted
3	I know that mobile phones can be used to capture photos, videos and audio for reporting.	135(45.0%)	115(38.3%)	30(10.0%)	20(6.7%)	300	3.27	Accepted
4	I am aware that mobile phones can be used to livestream events	120(40%)	110(36.7%)	50(16.7%)	20(6.7%)	300	3.10	Accepted
5	I know that mobile phones can be used to edit and publish news directly	125(41.7%)	115(38.3%)	40(13.3%)	20(6.7%)	300	3.17	Accepted
6	I am aware that mobile phones reporting is becoming common in journalism practice	150(50.0%)	100(33.3%)	30(10%)	20(6.7%)	300	3.28	Accepted

Source: field survey, 2025

From the responses presented in Table 5 it is evident that mass communication undergraduates at the University of Benin possess a very high level of awareness about the use of mobile phones for news reporting. For the first item, a large majority of respondents strongly agreed (53.3%) or agreed (33.3%) that they are aware mobile phones can be used for news reporting. With a mean score of 3.37, this result clearly shows that students are not only familiar with the concept but also recognize mobile phones as important journalistic tools.

A similar trend is observed in the second item, where 46.7% strongly agreed and 40% agreed that mobile phones make news reporting easier and faster. The mean score of 3.28 reinforces that students consider mobile phones valuable in enhancing the efficiency and immediacy of journalism. For the third statement, 45% strongly agreed and 38.3% agreed that mobile phones can capture photos, videos, and audio for reporting. This shows that students are aware of the multimedia capabilities of mobile devices and their importance in modern journalism.

In the fourth item, 40% strongly agreed and 36.7% agreed that mobile phones can be used to livestream events, though 16.7% disagreed. The mean score of 3.10 still indicates general acceptance, though awareness in this area appears to be slightly lower compared to other items. Similarly, 41.7% strongly agreed and 38.3% agreed that mobile phones can be used to edit and publish news directly, with a mean score of 3.17, showing recognition of mobile phones as end-to-end reporting tools.

Finally, awareness that mobile phone reporting is becoming common in journalism practice was particularly strong, as 50% strongly agreed and 33.3% agreed. The mean score of 3.28 indicates that students are fully aware of the growing global and local acceptance of mobile phones in professional journalism.

Taken together, the data clearly reveal that UNIBEN Mass Communication undergraduates are well-informed about the potential of mobile phones for news reporting. They not only understand the basic idea that mobile phones can be used in journalism but also acknowledge their practical functions such as capturing multimedia, live streaming, editing, and publishing. This high level of awareness suggests that students are attuned to the realities of modern journalism, where mobile phones have become indispensable in the news production process.

4.3. Data presentation and analysis of questionnaire based on the attitude of undergraduates in Mass Communication Department in Uniben on mobile phones for news reporting.

Table 6: Attitude of Mass communication undergraduates Towards the Use of Mobile Phones for News Reporting.

ITEMS	Attitude	SA	A	D	SD	Total	X	Decision
1	I consider news reported through mobile phones credible.	90(30%)	130(43.3%)	50(16.7%)	30(10%)	300	2.93	Accepted
2	I prefer mobile phones reporting to traditional news methods	100(33.3%)	110(36.7%)	60(20%)	30(10%)	300	2.93	Accepted
3	I believe mobile phone reporting is the future of journalism	150(50%)	100(33.3%)	30(10%)	20(6.7)	300	3.27	Accepted
4	I am willing to adopt mobile phones as my primary news reporting tool	120(40%)	120(40%)	40(13.3%)	20(6.7)	300	3.13	Accepted
5	I feel confident that mobile phone reporting can enhance my journalism career	130(43.3%)	110(36.7%)	40(13.3%)	20(6.7%)	300	3.17	Accepted
6	I believe mobile phones gives equal opportunities to all aspiring reporters	140(46.7%)	100(33.3%)	40(13.3%)	20(6.7%)	300	3.20	Accepted

Source: field survey, 2025

From the responses in Table 6 it is clear that students generally have a positive attitude towards the use of mobile phones for news reporting. On whether they consider news reported through mobile phones credible, the mean score was 2.93, indicating that students accept mobile phone reporting as a credible medium. Similarly, with a mean of 2.93, many students also expressed preference for mobile phone reporting over traditional news methods, reflecting their openness to embracing new digital practices.

A stronger attitude was seen in students' belief that mobile phone reporting represents the future of journalism, which recorded the highest mean score of 3.27. This suggests that students strongly associate mobile phones with the direction in which journalism is heading. Likewise, their willingness to adopt mobile phones as their primary reporting tool (mean = 3.13) and their confidence in its potential to enhance their careers (mean = 3.17) further emphasize this positive outlook.

Finally, students also recognized the democratizing role of mobile phones in journalism, with a mean of 3.20 showing agreement that mobile phones give equal opportunities to all aspiring reporters. Overall, the findings highlight a generally favorable and optimistic attitude among undergraduates towards the use of mobile phones for news reporting.

4.4. Data presentation and analysis of questionnaire based on the challenges of using mobile phones for news reporting

Table 7: Challenges of Using Mobile Phones for News Reporting.

Item	Challenges	SA	A	D	SD	Total	X	Decision
1	High internet/data costs affect my ability to use mobile phones for reporting	160 (53.3%)	100 (33.%)	25 (8.3%)	15 (5.0%)	300	3.35	Accepted
2	Poor electricity supply limits my use of mobile phones for reporting	150 (50.0%)	110 (36.7%)	25 (8.3%)	15 (5.0%)	300	3.32	Accepted
3	Lack of professional training reduces my effectiveness in mobile phone reporting	120 (40%)	130 (43.3%)	30 (10%)	20 (6.7%)	300	3.17	Accepted
4	Some people do not see mobile phone reporting as credible	100 (33.3%)	120 (40%)	50 (16.7%)	30 (10%)	300	2.93	Accepted
5	Poor network quality affects the timeliness of my news reports.	130 (43.3%)	120 (40%)	30 (10%)	20 (6.7%)	300	3.20	Accepted
6	Mobile phone reporting exposes me to ethical issues such as misinformation	120 (40%)	100 (33.3%)	50 (16.7%)	30 (10%)	300	2.97	Accepted

Source: field survey, 2025

The results presented in Table 7 indicate that Mass Communication undergraduates at the University of Benin face notable challenges in adopting mobile phones for news reporting. The most significant issue is the high cost of internet/data services, which recorded the highest mean score of 3.35. This highlights that students often struggle to afford sufficient data to effectively engage in mobile phone based journalism. Closely related to this is the problem of poor electricity supply (mean = 3.32), which disrupts consistent mobile phone usage, particularly for fieldwork or prolonged reporting activities.

In terms of skill and perception, students identified lack of professional training (mean = 3.17) as a limitation, stressing that although they own smartphones, they are not adequately equipped with the professional knowledge to fully utilize them for reporting. Furthermore, issues of credibility also surfaced, with a mean of 2.93 showing that students recognize skepticism from audiences or professionals who do not always regard mobile phone reporting as credible.

Technical barriers were also emphasized, particularly poor network quality (mean= 3.20), which affects the timeliness of reports, a critical factor in journalism. Lastly, ethical concerns such as misinformation and accuracy were acknowledged (mean = 2.97), indicating that while mobile phones broaden participation in news production, they also expose students to professional risks. Overall, these findings confirm that infrastructural, educational, and ethical barriers continue to shape how students engage with mobile phone reporting in journalism practice.

4.5. Discussion of Findings

To ensure that the objectives of the study was achieved, the research questions posed for the study were answered with the aid of data generated from the questionnaire. Apart from section A which was used to identify bio data of the respondents, Section B to D sought to answer research questions to the research as collected and collated from the responses provided from the items in the questionnaire by respondents.

Research Question One: What is the level Awareness of Mass Communication undergraduate at the University of Benin towards the Use of Mobile Phones for News Reporting?

The level of awareness of Mass Communication undergraduates towards the use of mobile phones for news reporting is relatively on a high level. For example, when asked whether they were aware that mobile phones can be used for reporting news, the mean score was 3.37, this aligns with the submission of Edewor and Obukoadata (2021), who found that Nigeria student journalists are increasingly aware of how mobile devices can serve as portable news rooms, enabling fast and flexible reporting. This finding suggests that mobile phones are no longer viewed merely as tools for personal communication or entertainment, but are increasingly recognized as important journalistic instruments.

Similarly, the responses showed that students strongly agreed that mobile phones make news reporting easier and faster, with a mean score of 3.28. This implies that students not only recognize the capability of mobile phones for reporting but also value their efficiency in disseminating information quickly. The awareness of the speed and immediacy mobile

phones bring to journalism is significant, especially in a digital era where news timeliness is a key determinant of credibility and relevance.

Beyond these, the data also highlighted that many students are aware of the diverse functionalities of mobile phones such as photography, video recording, and internet access that can be effectively applied in journalism. This broad awareness demonstrates that students are in tune with global journalistic trends where mobile phones have become integral to news gathering and dissemination.

Overall, the findings confirm that Mass Communication undergraduates at UNIBEN are not ignorant of the journalistic potential of mobile phones. Instead, they are well aware of their role in shaping contemporary journalism practice. This awareness forms a crucial foundation for students' eventual adoption and utilization of mobile phones in their professional practice, even though infrastructural and institutional challenges may still influence how far this awareness translates into consistent use.

Research Question 2: What is the Attitude of Mass Communication undergraduate at the University of Benin towards the use of Mobile Phones for News Reporting?

The attitude of Mass Communication undergraduates is showed to be generally positive towards the use of mobile phones for News Reporting. For instance, students agreed that they consider news reported through mobile phones credible, with a mean score of 2.93. This is consistent with Ekwueme and Okoro (2018) who found that Nigeria Journalist increasingly viewed mobile phones as legitimate journalistic tools capable of producing credible and timely news content.

This suggests that although some skepticism still exists, there is a growing acceptance of mobile phone based journalism as a legitimate source of news.

Additionally, students expressed a willingness to adopt mobile phones as their primary news reporting tool, with a mean score of 3.13. This shows their readiness to embrace technological changes in journalism, which is consistent with global trends in digital media. A stronger affirmation was observed in their belief that mobile phone reporting is the future of journalism, which recorded the highest mean score of 3.27. This reflects optimism among students about the central role mobile phones will play in shaping the next phase of journalism practice.

The responses further revealed that students feel confident that mobile phone reporting can enhance their journalism careers, with a mean of 3.17, while another mean score of 3.20 showed their agreement that mobile phones give equal opportunities to all aspiring reporters. This highlights the democratizing effect of mobile journalism, as students recognize that the affordability and accessibility of mobile phones can help level the playing field in news reporting.

Overall, the findings point to a positive and progressive attitude towards mobile phone use in journalism. Students not only see mobile phones as credible and convenient but also as empowering tools for their career development and for the advancement of journalism as a whole. However, the moderate mean scores, especially on credibility, indicate that more institutional support and training may be required to strengthen students' confidence in mobile phone reporting as a professional practice.

Research Question 3: What Challenges (if any) do they encounter in the process?

Mass Communication undergraduates at the University of Benin face multiple challenges in their use of mobile phones for News Reporting. One of the most pressing issues identified was the high cost of internet data, which recorded the highest mean score of 3.35. This finding shows that even though students are aware of the potentials of mobile phones and have a positive attitude towards their use, the financial burden of purchasing sufficient data limits their ability to fully engage in mobile phone reporting.

Another significant challenge was poor electricity supply, with a mean score of 3.32. This finding collaborates one Nwabueze (2014) and Agbanu (2008), who highlighted infrastructural constraints such as erratic power and high data cost as major obstacles to effective media practice in Nigeria. The irregular power situation in Nigeria hinders students' ability to keep their devices charged, thereby disrupting the consistency and reliability of mobile phone based reporting. This infrastructural challenge directly affects the timeliness and efficiency of student journalists, particularly when covering live events.

Skill gaps also emerged as an obstacle, as many students agreed that lack of professional training reduces their effectiveness in using mobile phones for reporting (mean = 3.17). This shows that while students are enthusiastic about adopting mobile phones for journalism, they often lack the technical knowledge and institutional exposure required to maximize the devices for professional use. Similarly, credibility concerns remain an issue, as students acknowledged that some audiences and professionals do not fully regard mobile phone reporting as credible (mean = 2.93).

Other challenges included poor network quality (mean = 3.20), which disrupts the timely uploading and sharing of content, and ethical concerns such as misinformation (mean = 2.97), which exposes students to risks in professional reporting. Reinforce findings by Oso (2012) that weak technological infrastructures and ethical lapses continue to affect the credibility of digital journalism in Nigeria. Together, these findings suggest that while mobile phones hold significant potential for transforming journalism practice among undergraduates, infrastructural deficiencies, skill limitations, and credibility issues continue to hinder their widespread adoption and effectiveness.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter focuses on the summary of the study, conclusion, recommendations, contributions to knowledge and suggestions for further studies

5.1. Summary

This study examines mass communication undergraduates in UNIBEN attitudes towards the use of mobile phones for news reporting in Benin City. This study selects 300 undergraduates full time students of the mass communication department of the university of Benin, Benin city from 100 level to 400 level. Mass communication students were selected because they are journalism students who are conversant with News writing and reporting. Invariably, the stratified random Sampling technique, in combination with simple random sampling technique was used for this study. This choice was influenced by the opportunity to give equal opportunities to members of the population to the chosen without bias.

The questionnaire was the main research Instrument, 300 questionnaires were distributed to full time undergraduates in the mass communication department of the university of Benin from 100 level to 400 level randomly and were all retrieved. The copies of questionnaire were distributed in this manner in order to ensure that the opinions of most mass communication students of the University of Benin were sampled. This was to draw out Response data required for the purpose of this study which includes the attitude of undergraduates towards mobile phones for news reporting, awareness and perception of the

use of mobile phones for news reporting and factors influencing undergraduates attitude towards the use of mobile phones for news reporting.

The theory of technological determinism and gratification were used in this study and a total of three research questions were answered in this study and the data collected and collated in this study were presented and analysed with the aim of simple percentage and mean score. The simple percentages were used to analyse the respondents personal data, while the mean score was used to answer the research questions and the criterion mean for this study was placed at 2.50.

The research revealed that Mass Communication undergraduates at the University of Benin possess a strong awareness of the importance of mobile phones in news reporting. Students acknowledged that mobile phones provide quick access to information, enable them to capture events as they happen, and facilitate the immediate dissemination of news to the public through social media platforms and other online channels. This awareness extends beyond basic usage to an understanding of mobile phones as powerful multimedia tools that combine video, audio, text, and photography in one device. Their responses also showed that they see mobile phones as useful not only for breaking news but also for routine coverage, interviews, and even educational projects, reflecting a recognition of mobile phones as essential in contemporary journalism.

The study showed that student's attitudes towards using mobile phones for news reporting are generally positive and encouraging. Many undergraduates agreed that mobile phone based reporting can produce credible and reliable content, especially when handled

with professionalism and ethical responsibility. They believe mobile phones make news gathering and dissemination faster, more flexible, and more convenient than traditional tools. However, some students still expressed reservations, pointing out that mobile reporting may lack the perceived prestige of using larger, professional cameras and equipment. Nonetheless, the overall attitude suggests a readiness to embrace mobile reporting, an openness to adapt to changing media practices, and a recognition that mobile journalism aligns with the digital realities of today's information society.

Despite the high level of awareness and positive attitudes, students face notable challenges in using mobile phones for journalistic purposes. Among these are infrastructural problems such as unstable electricity supply, which limits their ability to charge devices consistently, and the high cost of internet data, which makes sustained online news reporting financially difficult for many undergraduates. In addition, students identified a lack of formal training and institutional support in mobile reporting. While they own smartphones and use them for personal communication, their knowledge of advanced journalistic applications such as editing apps, verification tools, or live reporting platforms is limited. Cultural and professional perceptions also emerged as barriers, as some students feel mobile phone reporting may not always be taken seriously in formal journalism circles. Together, these challenges highlight the gap between awareness and actual practice, showing that without adequate training and resources, students cannot fully exploit mobile phones as reporting tools.

Conclusion

From the findings of this study, it is evident that the use of mobile phones for news reporting has become an integral part of modern journalism, and Mass Communication undergraduates at the University of Benin are not left out of this trend. The research established that students possess a very high level of awareness regarding the potential of mobile phones in journalistic practice. They recognize that mobile devices are no longer just tools for personal communication but also serve as powerful instruments for gathering, editing, and disseminating news quickly and effectively.

The study further revealed that the students hold generally positive attitudes towards the use of mobile phones for news reporting. They consider mobile-based reporting as credible and convenient, appreciating the flexibility, speed, and accessibility that mobile phones bring to the process of journalism. This positive disposition reflects a willingness to embrace technological innovations in the media landscape and suggests that the next generation of journalists is ready to align with global reporting practices.

However, the findings also underscore significant challenges that hinder the full adoption of mobile phones for journalism among undergraduates. Issues such as unstable electricity supply, the high cost of internet data, and the lack of adequate institutional training continue to limit the ability of students to apply mobile phones to professional reporting tasks. These challenges highlight the need for stronger integration of mobile reporting skills into journalism education, as well as infrastructural improvements to enable students to maximize the potential of mobile phones.

While Mass Communication undergraduates at the University of Benin are aware of and positively disposed towards mobile phone-based journalism, they remain constrained by infrastructural and educational barriers. For mobile reporting to achieve its full potential in Nigeria, deliberate efforts must be made by universities, policymakers, and media institutions to provide training, resources, and support that will bridge the gap between awareness and practice.

Recommendations

The following are recommendations made by the researcher in order to ensure that undergraduates have a positive attitude on the use of mobile phones on the use of mobile phones for news reporting.

1. Integration into Curriculum: The Department of Mass Communication at the University of Benin and other universities in Benin City should formally integrate mobile phone reporting into their curriculum. This will ensure that students are not only aware of the technology but also receive hands-on training in its professional use for news gathering, editing, and dissemination.

2. Workshops and Training: Regular workshops, seminars, and practical training sessions should be organized for students to build their technical competence in using mobile phones for journalism. This includes exposure to mobile editing applications, verification tools, and multimedia storytelling techniques.

3. Institutional Support: Universities should provide institutional support such as well-equipped media laboratories, subsidized internet access, and access to relevant software and mobile reporting kits. This will bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application.

5.5. Suggestion for further studies

The following topics are suggested for further examination in order to analyse undergraduates attitude on the use of mobile phones for news reporting

1. A Comparative Study of Mobile Phone Use for News Reporting among Mass Communication Students in Nigerian Universities
2. Lecturers' and Media Practitioners' Perspectives on Mobile Phone Journalism in Nigeria
3. Ethical and Professional Challenges of Mobile Phone News Reporting among Student Journalists
4. The impact of Mobile Phones News Reporting on Professional Journalism Practice in Nigeria.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

Department of Mass Communication,
Faculty of Arts,
Benin City,
Edo State.

Dear Respondent,

REQUEST FOR THE COMPLETION OF QUESTIONNAIRE

I am a student of the University of Benin, Benin City. I am conducting a research on **“Attitude of Mass Communication Undergraduates Towards The Use of Mobile Phones For News Reporting in Benin City Nigeria”**. I wish to solicit your support in carrying out research by completing attached questionnaire. Be assured that your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you.

Yours Faithfully,

Aisosa Success AIYAMENKHUE
Researcher

QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A: Biographic Data

INSTRUCTION: Please endeavour to tick and complete the questionnaire correctly from the options and supply the information where necessary.

1. Gender

Male ☐ Female ☐

2. Age

16 -20 ☐ 21- 25 ☐ 26 -30 ☐ Above 30

3. Level of Education

100 Level ☐ 200 level ☐ 300 level ☐ 400 level ☐

4. Marital Status

Married ☐ Single ☐ Divorced

SECTION B: What is the level Awareness of Mass Communication undergraduate at the University of Benin towards the Use of Mobile Phones for News Reporting?

INSTRUCTION: Kindly tick in the box the options that illustrate your disposition and agreement.

S/N	Detail values	Strongly Agree (SA)	Agree (A)	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I am aware that mobile phones can be used for new reporting				
2	Mobile phones make news reporting easier and faster				
3	I know mobile phones make news reporting				

	easier and faster phones can be used to capture photos, videos and audio for reporting				
4	I am aware that mobile phones can be used to livestream news events				
5	i know that mobile phones can be used to edit and publish news directly				
6	I am aware that mobile phones reporting is becoming common in journalism practice				

SECTION C: What is the Attitude of Mass Communication undergraduate at the University of Benin towards the use of Mobile Phones for News Reporting?

INSTRUCTION: Kindly tick in the box the options that illustrate your disposition and agreement.

S/N	Detail value	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7	I consider news reporting mobile phones credible				
8	I prefer mobile phone reporting to traditional news methods				
9	I believe mobile phone reporting is the future of journalism				
10	I am willing to adopt mobile phones as my primary news reporting tool				

11	I feel confident that mobile phones can enhance my journalism career				
12	I believe mobile phones give equal opportunities to all aspiring reporters				

SECTION D: What Challenges (if any) do they encounter in the process?

INSTRUCTION: Kindly tick in the box the options that illustrate your disposition and agreement.

S/N	Detail value	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13	High internet/data costs affects my ability to use mobile phones for reporting				
14	Poor electricity supply limits my use of mobile phones for reporting				
15	Lack of professional training reduces my effectiveness in mobile phone reporting				
16	Some people do not see mobile phone reporting as credible				
17	Poor network quality affects the timeliness of my news reports				
18	Mobile phones reporting exposes me to ethical issues such as misinformation				