**WhatsApp and Journalism: News Practices of Pakistani Journalists**

Authors: Nusrat Azeema1 & Ayesha Nazuk2

1Research Student MS, Mass Communication, S3H, National University of Sciences and Technology, NUST, Pakistan.

2Assistant Professor, School of Social Science and Humanities S3H, National University of Sciences and Technology, NUST, Pakistan.

**Abstract**

**WhatsApp has changed the way of traditional texting. It is a mobile messaging application. It allows free exchange of texts, videos, documents, location and pictures. The study points out that WhatsApp is an advance tool for information flow and has provided a fastest news sharing mechanism. The study further explored that due to inexpensive and secure services of WhatsApp it has not only promoted but provided a new horizon to the citizen journalism.**

***Keywords: WhatsApp, Journalism, Pakistan, media coverage tool, information gathering, news reporting, news coverage***

**Introduction**

Right from the emergence of Pakistan the field of journalism has evolved significantly as it is under continuous transformation. In the initial days of the independence of Pakistan, journalists faced resources constraints impeding efficient publication and circulation of newspaper. These constraints flowed from multiple resources such as influx of migrants, dearth of industries in the newly born country etc. Under these strenuous conditions the key stakeholders for the field of journalism started progressing step by step by initiating various national newspapers, news channels and news magazines.

Journalism is not just a profession it is a biggest responsibility for a person who is called journalist. Because journalists are not just telling their audience what happened in this world, rather they are also giving them information that will help them to make the best possible decision about their lives, their humanities and their government. Before 20th century journalist in Pakistan faced tough conditions as a lot of physical input was required. Journalistic practices in those times required a lot of manual labor as journalists had to use hands in the process of newspaper making. This manual labor started from the phase of gathering of news from the surroundings followed by the phase of noting it on the paper for an intelligent analysis of the collected information. The final phase of this manual labor demanded dispatch of news to printing press where decision about the color and format of the news was finalized. Pakistani news media has experienced significant enhancement due to various factors such as high-tech advancements in news production, and increased news awareness among individuals due to the increase in literacy rate and university education. Journalistic media is showing divergence from print to electronic broadcast media or newspaper to TV and from websites to digital technology.

In today’s era, the news media is an instant source of getting information about the world therefore there is a responsibility on journalists’ shoulder who give us this information. New development in news media in Pakistan started in 2002 with promulgation of freedom of information ordinance of 2002 the PEMRA (Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority) ordinance of 2002. The freedom of information ordinance contains positive features acknowledging citizens’ right to know (Arshad & Ashraf , 2015). Advancements in science and technology has affected the field of journalism and consequently journalist’s practices are changing. Journalism is such profession in which truth, equality, authentication are important elements of journalist’s practices. It is the duty and responsibility of journalists to advocate societal news and modify them, present the facts, carried out non-adoptability behavior towards plagiarism, unveil the truth, keep the information source private and presenting the assumptions with facts. However, in order to bring the instant big breaking news on daily basis, journalists are using and utilizing new trends and advancements in their text message applications (Edwards, 2016).

However, in news practices, digital communication activities get recognition from incident of London bombing occurred in July 2005. Other incidents like Airplane in the Hudson River Twitter photo 2009, 2011’s Egypt protest video on YouTube, 2015’s Syrian baby's lifeless body lying in the surf on Turkish beach (Hermida, 2012) etc., all these incidents give rise towards the need of new communication channels. Journalists and other media person always strive for new technologies (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2001). This is the demand of journalism profession because journalists are always eager to discover unfolds facts that can generate any news story or breaking news. In Pakistan, this new advancement in technology makes journalists life easy as it provides support to handle the burden of journalistic practices (Arshad & Ashraf, 2014). In today’s era, journalists in order to fulfill their information communication needs, are using different digital applications and “WhatsApp” is one of them that greatly influence the news practices of journalists.

All around the world, “WhatsApp” usages frequency increases among the journalists as well as high authorities. Like, Kenya’s Ministries are using “WhatsApp” for press releases and reporting for good public relations. Kenya’s Ministries also shared their important information with the journalists with the help of “WhatsApp” application (Wainaina, 2016). After the emergence of “WhatsApp” in Asia, it is considered as one of the reliable and friendly usage application among journalists in Pakistan. According to the research conducted by Pruto (2016) one billion active users used “WhatsApp” every month. After the appearance of this new messaging application “WhatsApp”, journalists have realized the importance in the field of journalism.

In Pakistan, Journalistic practices are considered as controlled by the strict editorial practices. However, media organizations are enthusiastically using “WhatsApp” to distributes their news and beats (Cohen, 2016). Journalists are now well aware that traditional practices are no longer useful in communication and “WhatsApp” easily replaces the way of news and information dissemination (Siapera, 2012). Because of its easy use, now Pakistani journalists are also adopting this new messaging application “WhatsApp” and share their pictures with others, exchange recordings within their colleagues, reports, voice recordings and much more. Journalists are writing digital tickers for news channels, stories, headlines, news, research, discussions and records interviews, taking pictures, makes videos on the spot, and also writing scripts (Edwards, 2016). WhatsApp is a growing ground for learning and application for journalists and it is shaping the new practices of journalism (Brown et al., 2015). Due to immense effects “WhatsApp” emerged as “Global Phenomenon” (Pew research center, 2010). “WhatsApp” is advanced correspondence application that promises comfort usage to its application users and its effects seems on journalism field. This application is not only influencing the way messages are conveyed rather it also affects the journalist’s practices of news gathering in the whole world. Journalistic practices are changing, news gathering and transferring of information is becoming digitalized day by day (Herbert, 1999). In today’s digital space, social interactions have become so tangled with “WhatsApp” that it is important to examine how journalists are using it for the news practices.

**Literature Review:**

Historical evidence demonstrates that new practices can spread generally crosswise over journalism, which is ultimately transforming the field. Journalism has been around “since people recognized the need to share information about themselves with others” (Zelizer, 2004) and journalists share different news and information with others with the help of new applications (Cochran, 1997). New message exchange applications have improved the practices of gathering news-stories and information that is interesting for journalists (Council of Europe, 2015).

Day by day “WhatsApp” has changed the way of how news is gathered and is becoming an important source for news. “WhatsApp” first got recognition, when a Syrian immigrant shared his fight to reach Europe immediately on “WhatsApp” in term of reporting and news gathering (Specia 2015). In this report a young man’s struggle public in Turkey via a chat on messaging service on mobile. Reporter found that just an application facilitated her to build a relationship with her source that would not be easy otherwise (Warren, 2015). According to a research one out of every seven persons in this world is using “WhatsApp” therefore, “WhatsApp” is now used as a media tool as well (Reid, 2016). In current circumstances “WhatsApp” can help to diminish the hindrance between the reporter and the sources. BBC incorporated “WhatsApp” in news-gathering practices like they use “WhatsApp” for *health* news like *Ebola* education in West Africa (Frankenhauser, 2015). “WhatsApp” is the main application which triggers 500 million people in this region and it’s free and that’s why people get benefits with this step (Lunden, 2014). BBC World Service used “WhatsApp” quite efficiently during *“Typhoon Haiyan”* at the end of 2014 in the Philippines (Shukman, 2015).In this case, the creative team on the ground in the Philippines set up “WhatsApp” account on the team phone and encouraged listeners to get in touch with the program “[World Have Your Say Programme](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p002w559)” via “WhatsApp” alongside the more traditional channels (Reid, 2014).

Apart from the coverage on health issues, “WhatsApp” is also being used for the political coverage. BBC used “WhatsApp” for India’s *election* by distributing news, information and political trends. Liz Corbin the BBC News Singapore Bureau Editor says “WhatsApp” is something we've been using for major deployments for some time now (Llewellyn, 2016). For promoting journalism on “WhatsApp” we have some examples like “*Pope Francis*” coverage in The New York Times by “WhatsApp”. New York Times experimented with “WhatsApp” to updates pope watcher. People who want “*Pope Francis”* information first they added the contact numbers and then texted “*POPE*” on that number which signaled that you want updates and at any time if you want to leave this then just write “*UNSUBSCRIBE*” to the same number and you quit (Welsh, 2015). BBC News India gives a number to those who are interested to know about India’s election progress and people think “WhatsApp” is the biggest game changer in elections (Barot, 2014). Real advances from experimentation and continuously hard-hitting the way journalistic work has facilitated in lessening the gap among skilled print professionals, digitally-intellectual editorial people and developers in the newsrooms.

The Guardian’s reporter Adam Gabbatt, used a “WhatsApp” Broadcast List to hold the chat on “Republican Presidential Debate 2015”. He covered the politics debate by taking the conversation to “[WhatsApp](https://www.whatsapp.com/)”, posted updates, chatting about all the big moments, and posted a few pictures. He also used to give a number to those who want to participate in this conversation, they write “*JOIN*” before start chatting and broadcasting. After joining the group if a member he/she wants to quit he write “*STOP*” to unsubscribe. As a result, during this broadcast phase, Gabbatt repeatedly replied back to the broadcast group what people were discussing with him separately (Gabbatt, 2015). “WhatsApp” broadcast lists allow the users to send out messages to many contacts at one time, but the contacts who accept the messages are only able to send replies to the original person who started this broadcast (Marshall, 2016). Trushar Barot, the World Service apps editor says that this innovative service might right away make it easier to convey content to “WhatsApp” clients (Barot, 2014).

“WhatsApp” has a unique and best feature of end-to-end encryption. An improvement to its confidentiality makes it almost unfeasible for anybody to understand writing and read users’ (Journalist’s) communication—even the group independently. The innovative encryption system means “WhatsApp” communication will currently trek all the means to the receivers’ gadget before simply being encoded among the user’s gadget along with “WhatsApp” server (Greenberg, 2014). “WhatsApp” founder, Jan Koum stated that the annual subscription fee was still a blockade to some users (Fried, 2016). PPF (Pakistan Press Foundation) reported that since 2000, more than 200 journalists were killed (Rehman 2014) and another report says that 28 journalists were killed in 2015 (PPF 2015). According to CPJ (Committee to Project Journalism) report there are the 14 countries where at least five journalists have been murdered without a single perpetrator being convicted in which Pakistan is on 9th position (Committee to Protect Journalists, 2015). According to the CPJ (Committee to Protect Journalist), Pakistan is the 4th deadliest country for journalists where sensitive or serious news reporting and news coverage punishment is death by the hands of unknown groups (AFP 2016). Dawn newspaper editor Zafar Abbas take “WhatsApp” initiative for safe the journalist's life is remarkable (Huang, 2016). In terms of source safety, “WhatsApp” co-founders Jan Koum and Brian Acton said that “WhatsApp” has always shown its main concern in making user data and communication as secure as possible. Due to its end-to-end encryption, journalists feel extra protected and secure than before (Aljazeera, 2016).

In order to explore the use of “WhatsApp” in Rawalpindi/Islamabad (Pakistan) in term of their professional demands this paper analyses the qualitative study, the topic of study is being implemented by other researchers in different aspects and with various point of views. There are many researches done regarding “WhatsApp” use, its new feature and key role in communication scenario and the positive impact of “WhatsApp” on youth cherished chat (DJ Ms & Jisha K, 2014). In this study, they found that “WhatsApp” has created a sagacity of familiarity, closeness, belongingness and relationship with friends and relatives. Some of the most well-known technological modernizations are smart phones, laptops and using the internet in journalism. Journalist have significantly exaggerated, many aspects of survives. Today, the Internet usage in journalism is growing day by day at a far-fetched speed (Dutton, 2013).

In this research, to understand the Journalistic news practices, Glaser & Strauss’s (1967) grounded theory process is being followed. Grounded theory is a technique or a process in qualitative study which indicates major themes of any analyses (Martin & Gynnild, 2011). As a whole, researches make it obvious that journalistic news gathering practices have been changing with the passage of time. The researches, reports and news articles will become the basis of this study as the research is identifying that the WhatsApp more or less fulfills the journalistic demands. This research deals with the journalistic news practices in media and the effect of changing trends in modern news practices. Glaser & Strauss (1967) declared that grounded theory is a methodical finding of a theory from given information and it is a general method of comparative analysis of gathered data. For current study, we have used semi-structured interviews. The semi-structure in-depth interview directly gives an apparent position of instructions for inquirers and can present consistent, analogous qualitative information (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). In this qualitative research, we inductively derive theory through analyzing rich data carefully and presented through thick description. The grounded theory process is followed in this research to explain the changing patterns in news practices due to technological advancements like “WhatsApp”.

**Research Questions**

RQ1: How are the journalists in Rawalpindi and Islamabad using “WhatsApp” to meet their profession’s demands?

RQ2: How and in what ways it is affecting their news practices?

**Methodology**

This article follows the qualitative approach by utilizing in-depth interviews to examine the perceptions of Pakistani journalists about using of “WhatsApp” in their practices. In-depth interviews are useful tool in exploratory qualitative social research and the main tool for inquiring research objectives (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston 2014). Semi-structured in-depth interviews can convey the meaningful discussion of the respondents’ personal verbal communication (Lindlof, 2010). For this research study, researchers have used snowball sampling technique. snowball sampling is also called referral sampling technique and it is used when a proper sampling frame is not available or the characteristic under study is rare. Snowball sampling is mostly used for different respondents (Bailey, 1994). The researchers have conducted 20 interviews of professional journalists working in Pakistan (Rawalpindi/Islamabad). It has been made sure that sample is made representative by covering respondents from diverse groups i.e. different in their gender-specification, working experience, Job designations, and in their languages but they are selected on their availability. Before the interview, researcher made phone calls to different journalists upon the reference of other journalists (snowball technique) in order to explain reasons for conducting this research and ask for their help. Some interviews are taken telephonically while for some interviews, researcher visited different offices. Average time to conduct the interview is twenty minutes.

|  |
| --- |
| Table 1.*Characteristics of Interviewee* |
| Gender Number of Interviewee Urdu News-Paper TV ChannelMale Journalist 18 10 08Female Journalist 02 01 01 Total Journalist 20 |

**Findings and Discussion:**

First objective of this research study is to find out that how journalists are using “WhatsApp” in their news practices. In the light of our in-depth interviews, four themes were identified. First theme Work practices deals with how the work practices of journalists were associated with the use of “WhatsApp” in journalism. Second theme News Reliability deals with how the news reliability on “WhatsApp” advances the journalistic practices. Third theme deals with end-to-end encryption. Fourth theme Citizen Journalism deals with “Is citizen journalism boosted through “WhatsApp”? Finally, fifth theme Information Flow deals with looking of quickest information flow in journalistic practices.

***Work practices:***

Work practices of journalism are related to previous methods used by the journalists for information gathering and news reporting to meet their journalistic demands. Through our in-depth interviews, we tried to gain a multi-faceted approach keen on the journalists’ old news practices, the practice of information gathering and the use of “WhatsApp”. In an interview, a senior journalist and bureau-chief Abb Takk news channel Mazhar Tufail (retd) said;

‘In 2002 when electronic media came in Pakistan we used just *Fax*, which was very difficult as ink used to fade away with the passage of time and we didn't have any other evidence of our reports, and due to lack of physical evidence higher authorities said “it is a typical mistake” so many of our journalists were dismissed or fired from their jobs. Than we used *Email* which gives ease but at that time we need trainings for manage archives. With the help of *Messenger,* we feel more ease in our journalistic practices. But now I see that, all journalists welcome new mobile applications for news gathering practices like “WhatsApp”.

According to Ramaprasad, Liu and Garisson (2012) previous research, “respondents believed that these technologies, especially computer, Internet, and cell phone or their different upcoming applications, had located news at their fingertips, eased contacts with international and national information sources, varied their thought’s pool, and ready their careers quicker and easier in a few ways”. Journalists welcome new technologies all the time and with the passage of time our journalistic practices have changed. In Pakistan broadcast journalism is less practical in history and flourish after 2002 (Shrivastava, 2005).

Though some journalist pointed that now reporting days are rarely ‘tough’ as in the past when new technologies, mobile apps and other facilities were rare we worked day and night to save our jobs. The view about the traditional and current work practices in journalism, Daily Halaat Islamabad’s newspaper journalist, Ijaz Farooqi said;

‘In my 30 years’ of experience in print media, I saw many new technologies and practices in journalism’s field. In the start, we worked with typing machines and we faced a lot of troubles because of the lack of resources and inefficient record’s management. Nowadays, new journalists are more advance and quick, they use different mobile Applications and send us news, we send it to the printer and printer prints in good quality. Now the flurrying of news gathering practices has become tranquil’.

Journalists also receive some training in new technology for improving their news practices. Mr. Riaz-ul-haq, Express Tribune journalist mentioned that;

‘Due to “WhatsApp” and other facilities now I call my job a “Couch Journalism” because we get or pick news from different “WhatsApp” group in our news room or offices from different ministries PRO’s side and we rewrite it according to our channel’s policy or interest’.

Mr. Tazeen Akhtar Senior journalist at Daily Azkaar says that;

‘Very fast, very effective and most convenient application is journalist life is “WhatsApp”.

Journalists express their satisfaction with the usage of “WhatsApp” because it allows them to get information and share it or report it from a distance and connect them with their offices or work places.

***Reliability:***

From journalist’s interviews, we understand that in start of news reporting and news gathering journalist use or find different tools for checking their news’ reliability and these tools are changing with the passage of time. When the researcher, asked about the reliability issue of news-gathering in “WhatsApp” some of them said mostly it is reliable.

Shams Rehman Abbasi, Economy journalist and member of National Press Club said;

“As a journalist when I see “WhatsApp” group for any news then I also know the other journalists too, who share and report any news in this group. Some time we see some fake news, which is not properly verified than all group journalists become furious and said who are you? What is your designation? Tell us your channel name etc…. but it is rare in my view just 30 to 40 % chances are for unreliability issue otherwise 60 to 70 % are reliable and accurate”.

Daily Times journalist, Miss. Memona Arif noted that:

“Yes I feel it is reliable because government ministry officials and spokes persons upload their events on “WhatsApp” group for journalists and news channels”.

All interviews give almost same reply in term of reliability they said that “WhatsApp” is reliable for news practices. Nearly every news outlet is using “WhatsApp” in some way or the other. Majority of the Journalists, editors and reporters said “WhatsApp” is frequently used for work. The following summarizes those findings that are most relevant to journalism practices.

Mr. Tazeen Akhtar mentioned that;

“WhatsApp” is a fastest and reliable platform for news sharing and reporting for journalist and we all use it very well because it gives us safe environment to practice. Now many media houses encourage new apps for instant news coverage or reporting”.

***End-to-End Encryption:***

When the researcher asked about the “WhatsApp” new feature end-to-end encryption role in journalism and news gathering practices. As Shakeel Anjum, a senior journalist and president of the Pakistan National Press Club said:

‘I just found that the fore most and basic benefit of “WhatsApp” is that we talk to our sources without external tapping or it is protected. On phone call news gathering is tough and not safe. This new security provides us good confidence and our sources also feel secure on “WhatsApp” call rather than any other for news sharing’.

Mr. Farukh Telecom journalist ARY news TV channel answer on that, ‘

“WhatsApp” call or message is not easily traced out so as a journalist my source and I are safe and secure’.

Mr. Syed Asim Raza senior journalist at SUCH TV also told us that,

‘In “WhatsApp” our privacy is little more maintained and we feel secure in news sharing’.

In an interview Mr. Javeed Jadee senior journalist NewsOne TV channel said that;

‘I and my friend talk on some confidential issues and we know about online Bug, then we use code wording on telephone and we face wrong interpretation problems but on “WhatsApp” we are openly discussing every issue without any hesitation and code wording’.

Other journalists mentioned that end-to-end encryption is a good feature in term of source privacy. Because every journalist’s first priority is, that their source becomes safe and secure and “WhatsApp” provides this security.

***Citizen Journalism:***

For some interviewees “WhatsApp” has become a good news sharing tool in term of citizen journalism. Mr. Nawaz Raza Chief Reporter of Nawa-e-waqt newspaper encouraged “WhatsApp” in newsroom communication. He stated; ‘Most of the time, citizens report before our reporters, so they are more active than us now’.

In the interview Mr. Javeed Jadee senior journalist said that;

‘Citizen’s participation has increased due to “WhatsApp” in media and it has built a partnership between citizens and media channels. Citizens record a video on spot and send it to media channels. Citizens are very active in media in term of news sharing practices’.

Mr. Riaz-ul-haq Express Tribune journalist said that,

‘In Pakistan some channels motivate citizen to report them but this trend is so rare at that time. But yes, with the passage of time it will improve with citizen journalism’.

Senior Journalist, Mr. Tazeen Akhtar, mentioned that;

 ‘some people criticize on that boost of citizen journalism because they think people exaggerate in news but I think every new technology have some positive or negative aspect so it’s good because we are informed before anyone else. He also said that, “WhatsApp” is a medium of connection between reporters, journalists and news-channels’.

***Information Flow:***

For many interviewees, “WhatsApp” in many ways was more useful and quickest than any other news gathering tool. It unleashes its power when you reverse the newsroom-audience information flow— from news-gathering to broadcasting. According to the Director of the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism on the basis of their distinctive data from 10 countries find that Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Google+, and “WhatsApp” are considerably significant set-ups for news. In these findings “WhatsApp” is being use for information sharing and discovering news. According to this statistic, 26% of users in Spain at the age of 18-24 years use “WhatsApp” for news purpose. (Newman & Levy, 2014).

Mr. Shahbaz Ahmad SUCH TV journalist stated that;

‘Today without “WhatsApp” you can’t do anything in electronic media. Within minutes we share any news in groups and every journalist is informed with this news’.

Print and electronic media journalists both use “WhatsApp” on some levels but the difference of reporting is just on the basis of time. In electronic media, every second is important so “WhatsApp” help them on quick sharing and editing their reports for news channels. But print media have 12-hour time relaxation and they share their news coverage and images on WhatsApp. Now a new trend in Pakistan is risen which is called Visual Journalism in which every print or electronic media have their own webpages where they update current audio-video news for them they appreciate “WhatsApp” because it gives them instant news-feed.

 It’s quick, easy and cheap, more personal than email and less likely to be overloaded. It’s very simple to share photos and video that others could start to check out and verify. It’s great for multi-location deployments or where your team is spread over a wide area. Everyone can see what everyone else is doing so correspondents won’t be asked for ‘lives’ when they’re out of action/busy. Miss. Memona Arif journalist, Daily Times said;

“WhatsApp” gives ease in this field but some journalists rely on shortcuts and forget the field practices. Now official statements and regular news are update on WhatsApp and if it is in Urdu news than we go on WhatsApp web apply bar-code then convert it in Unicode and finally air it on different TV channels’.

Mr. Shahbaz journalist at SUCH TV said that; ‘the places where access to camera is difficult or not allowed then we use our mobile-cameras and “WhatsApp”, to send our news to our channels. And it’s excellent for team-building and mutual support. The majority of interviewers from the electronic media stipulates that their TV channel’s standards were strict on timely news, and made worse by “WhatsApp”. Now we run with time and use “WhatsApp” for TV news and send tickers with “WhatsApp”.

Despite efforts to do so, the paper have its limitations. At first, this study has its narrow area of research because this research is limited on Rawalpindi/Islamabad’s working journalist, therefore for further research on other countries and cities is required. Second limitation is gender in our process researchers just go to the next person (snowball sampling) which is referred by the first one so many of my interviewees are male which is a shocking finding for us that number of male journalist are far more than female journalist in Pakistan but because it’s not my major finding so for further research we try to focus on gender base journalistic practices as well and find their views too. At last the final limitation in this research is qualitative study; therefore, for further research other quantitative methods can be applied.

|  |
| --- |
| **WhatsApp** |
| Work Practices |
| End-to-End Encryption |
| Information Flow |
| Reliability |
| Citizen Journalism |

**Conclusion and Future Research Suggestions**

This research’s results conferred the scope of “WhatsApp” in journalistic news gathering practices. The results showed diverse opinion of journalist regarding “WhatsApp” usage in journalism field some senior journalist interviews reveals that they are still hesitant to adopt “WhatsApp” in their newsroom. Research study results added better understanding of how the Pakistani journalists organized “WhatsApp” within the current work practices, news reliability, end-to-end Encryption, citizen journalism and information flow inside the journalistic practices. All journalists mentioned that people are now more active in using “WhatsApp” and with the help of that tool they are more inclined to join journalism profession.

Some journalist believed that new mobile application “WhatsApp” has decreased the attraction of journalism. Other reason they highlighted that “WhatsApp” make the journalists lazy as they don’t verify the news-stories physically. The other effects of “WhatsApp” include changing patterns in information flow and even sometimes it is used as shortcut method for gathering news which contains little risk or threatening the journalism’s future in Pakistan. Interview’s results reveal that journalists are not only using “WhatsApp” for chatting purposes however they also gaining benefit practically by using this texting application in professional practices. Secondly our research reveals multi-dimensional themes (Work practices, Reliability, End-to-End Encryption, Citizen Journalism and Information Flow) influencing the Pakistani journalists towards adoption of WhatsApp in their news practices.

In spite of its limitations, this research study suggests that “WhatsApp” can become a new application for Journalists which helps them in instant news gathering process. From interviews, we understand that with the invention of “WhatsApp” journalists’ news practices gaining changes with the time. Now Pakistani journalists are using and find “WhatsApp” as cheaper and reliable services for sharing their news, information and pictures. For further research on this area, the other researchers can work on comparison of Pakistani journalistic practices with other countries and cultures.

**References**

1. AFP. 2016. *115 killings make Pakistan fourth deadliest country for journalists.* DAWN. Accessed SEP 27, 2016. <http://www.dawn.com/news/1237386>.
2. Aljazeera. (2016, April 6). WhatsApp expands encryption to protect messages. Aljazeera news.
3. Arshad & Ashraf. (2014). Journalism Ethics: Evidence from Media Industry of Pakistan. Global Media Journal, 7(2), 25-36. Retrieved Oct 6, 2016.
4. Bailey, K. D. (1994). Methods of Social Research (fourth ed.). The Free Press.
5. Barot, T. (2014, April 4). *BBC*. (BBC Academy) Retrieved Feb 21, 2016, from ACADEMY: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/collegeofjournalism/entries/75eccc98-f127-348d-a9cb-a55aa702e4ee>.
6. *BBC NEWS*. (2013, Nov 13). Retrieved Feb 24, 2016, from BBC NEWS: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-24928138>.
7. BBC News. (2016). *MOBILE NEWS*, DRIVING INNOVATION IN NEWS. (Connected Studio) Retrieved APRIL 10, 2016, from BBC NEWS LABS: <http://bbcnewslabs.co.uk/categories/mobile-news/>
8. BBC World. 2015. *BBC Have Your Say on WhatsApp.* BBC News, Nov 3. Accessed Sep 27, 2016. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-30821245>.
9. Brown, Tom H., van der Merwe, Herman J. (2015). *The Mobile Learning Voyage - From Small Ripples to Massive Open Waters.* Venice, Italy: Springer Cham Heidelberg.
10. Cochran, W. (1997). JOURNALISM'S NEW GEOGRAPHY: HOW ELECTRONIC TOOLS ALTER. (T. Harrison, Ed.) *The Electronic Journal of Communication, 7*.
11. Cohen, D. (2016, Jan 29). *Opportunities in Asia for WhatsApp (Infographic).* Retrieved April 10, 2016, from Social Times: [http://www.adweek.com/socialtimes/gwi-whatsapp-region infographic/633531](http://www.adweek.com/socialtimes/gwi-whatsapp-region%20infographic/633531)
12. Cohen D, Crabtree B. "Qualitative Research Guidelines Project." July 2006. <http://www.qualres.org/HomeGrou-3589.html>
13. Committee to Protect Journalists. (2015, October 8). Getting Away with Murder. New York.
14. Corbin, L. (n.d.). Singapore Bureau Editor at BBC News.
15. Council of Europe. (2015). *Journalism at risk: Threats, challenges and perspectives.* Council of Europe.
16. DJ Ms & Jisha K. (2014). WhatsApp: Attend Setter in Mobile Communication among Chennai Youth. *IOSR-JHSS*.
17. Dutton, W. H. (2013). *The Oxford Handbook of Internet Studies.* OUP Oxford.
18. Edwards, V. (2016). *Research Skills for Journalists.* Routledge.
19. Evans, J. (2015). *How WhatsApp for web could change the newsroom.* World News Publishing Focus.
20. Frankenhauser, N. (2015). *Webinar recap: How the BBC is using WhatsApp to boost engagement.* World News Publishing Focus.
21. Fried, I. (2016, JAN 18). *Facebook's WhatsApp Is Now Free*. (I. FRIED, Editor) Retrieved OCT 4, 2016, from RECODE: <http://www.recode.net/2016/1/18/11588896/facebook-owned-whatsapp-to-drop-subscription-fees-for-its-popular>.
22. Gabbatt, A. (2015, Dec 15). *US election 2016*. Retrieved Feb 22, 2016, from theguradian: <http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/dec/14/whatsapp-republican-debate-cnn-political-discussion>.
23. Gabbatt, Adam. 2015. *Join us on WhatsApp for real-time chat during the Republican debate.* News Report, Las Vegas: theguradian. Accessed Sep 27, 2016. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/dec/14/whatsapp-republican-debate-cnn-political-discussion>.
24. Greenberg, A. (2014, November 18). WhatsApp Just Switched on End-to-End Encryption for Hundreds of Millions of Users. WIRED.
25. Harrower, Tim. 2007. *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism.* Vol. 3. McGraw-Hill Higher Education. Accessed Sep 27, 2016.
26. Herbert, J. (1999). *Journalism in the Digital Age: Theory and practice for broadcast, print and On-line media.* Focal Press.
27. Hermida, A. (2012). *Social Journalism: Exploring How Social Media is Shaping Journalism.* Blackwell Reference Online.
28. Huang, C. L. (2016, Feb 2). Pakistani Editors use WhatsApp group to keep journalists safe. *Pakistani Editors use WhatsApp group to keep journalists safe*. World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers.
29. Integrated Publishing. (n.d.). METHODS OF GATHERING NEWS. *METHODS OF GATHERING NEWS*. Integrated Publishing, Inc. Retrieved FEB 23, 2016, from <http://www.tpub.com/journalist/56.htm>.
30. Journalist 3 & 2 - Introduction to Journalism and other Reporting Practices. (2014). *Journalist 3 & 2 - Introduction to Journalism and other Reporting Practices*. Integrated Publishing. Retrieved October 4, 2016, from <http://photographytraining.tpub.com/14130/css/Chapter-1-The-Navy-Journalist-13.htm>.
31. Khandelwal, S. (2016, Jan 18). *The Hacker News*. Retrieved Feb 22, 2016, from <http://thehackernews.com/2016/01/whatsapp-free-lifetime.html>.
32. Kovach & Rosenstiel. 2001. *The Elements of Journalism: What News People Should Know and the Public Should Expect.* Three Rivers Press. <https://books.google.com.pk/books/about/The_Elements_of_Journalism.html?id=A1QdLpebfnIC&redir_esc=y>.
33. Lee, C. (2007). Korean immigrants' viewing patterns of Korean satellite television and its role in their lives. *Asian Journal of Communication*.
34. Lindlof. (2010). *Qualitative Communication Research Methods.* SAGE Publications.
35. Llewellyn, S. (2016, March 30). *For breaking news, WhatsApp can be a strong team player*. Retrieved APRIL 10, 2016, from BBC: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/collegeofjournalism/entries/00a10ab9-0923-4a4d-817c-0a9d9715ba8c>.
36. Lunden, I. (2014, OCT 16). *BBC Uses WhatsApp for an Ebola Health Alert Service in West Africa*. (I. Lunden, Editor, & M. Arrington, Producer) Retrieved FEB 21, 2016, from TechCrunch: <http://techcrunch.com/2014/10/16/bbc-whatsapp-ebola/>
37. Marrouch, R. (2014). *The changing face of newsgathering in the social and digital age.* United Kingdom: THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION.
38. Marshall, C. (2016). *WhatsApp update: end-to-end encryption across all platforms.* ANDROIDPIT.
39. McCracken, G. (1988). The Long Interview (Vol. 13). Canada: SAGE. Retrieved Oct 15, 2016.
40. McDermott, J. (2015, April 25). *Asia*. (BBC NEWS) Retrieved April 11, 2016, from BBC NEWS: <http://www.bbc.com/news/live/world-asia-32703129>.
41. Mohammed, O. (2016). How Tanzanian journalists use WhatsApp to report the news. International Journalists' Network. Retrieved Oct 6, 2016, from <https://ijnet.org/en/blog/how-tanzanian-journalists-use-whatsapp-report-news>.
42. Newman & Levy. (2014). REUTERS INSTITUTE DIGITAL NEWS REPORT 2014. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism.
43. O’Donovan, C. (2014, June 10). Mobile & Apps. Retrieved from Nieman Lab: http://www.niemanlab.org/2014/06/around-the-world-media-outlets-and-journalists-are-using-chat-apps-to-spread-the-news/
44. Pakistan Press Foundation. (2016, FEB 10). PPF. Retrieved FEB 22, 2016, from Pakistan Press Foundation: <http://www.pakistanpressfoundation.org/2016/02/pakistani-editors-use-whatsapp-group-to-keep-journalists-safe/>.
45. *Pakistani Editors use WhatsApp group to keep journalists safe.* (2016, Feb 10). Retrieved Feb 22, 2016, from Pakistan Press Foundation: <http://www.pakistanpressfoundation.org/2016/02/pakistani-editors-use-whatsapp-group-to-keep-journalists-safe/>.
46. PPF. 2015. *28 journalists killed in Pakistan during 2015.* News Report, Pakistan Press Foundation. Accessed Sep 27, 2016. <http://www.pakistanpressfoundation.org/2015/12/28-journalists-killed-in-pakistan-during-2015/>.
47. Pruto, R. (2016, Feb 3). The Gospel Herald TECHNOLOGY. *WhatsApp Reaches One Billion Active Users One Day Faster Than Gmail Did - See more at:* [*http://www.gospelherald.com/articles/61931/20160203/whatsapp-reaches-one-billion-active-users-one-day-faster-than-gmail-did*](http://www.gospelherald.com/articles/61931/20160203/whatsapp-reaches-one-billion-active-users-one-day-faster-than-gmail-did).
48. Radcliffe, D. (2015, June 2). *the Media Briefing*. Retrieved April 10, 2016, from How the BBC is harnessing mobile platforms to engage global audiences: <https://www.themediabriefing.com/article/how-the-bbc-is-harnessing-mobile-apps-to-engage-global-audiences>
49. Ramaprasad, Liu & Garrison. (2012). Ethical use of new technologies: where. *Asian Journal of Communication*, 98-114.
50. Accessed SEP 27, 2016. <http://www.pakistanpressfoundation.org/2014/09/journalists-attack-2/>.
51. Reid, A. (2014, march 20). *journalism.co.uk*. (C. Albeanu, Editor, J. Thompson, Producer, & Mousetrap Media Ltd) Retrieved Feb 21, 2016, from journalism.co.uk: <https://www.journalism.co.uk/news/four-new-ways-to-use-social-media-for> newsgathering/s2/a556164/
52. Reid, A. (2016, FEB 16). *WhatsApp at 1 billion: How can journalists use the chat app for newsgathering?* Retrieved FEB 21, 2016, from FIRSTDRAFT NEWS: <http://firstdraftnews.com/whatsapp-at-1-billion-how-can-journalists-use-the-chat-app-for-newsgathering/>.
53. Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston. 2014. *Qualitative Research Practice a Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers.* 2. SAGE Publications Ltd. Accessed Sep 27, 2016.
54. S. Brennen, B. (2013). *Qualitative Research Methods for Media Studies.* Routledge.
55. Shafer, R. (2009). Comparing development journalism and public journalism as interventionist press model. *Asian journal of communication*.
56. Shukman, D. (2015, Oct 18). *BBC NEWS*. Retrieved April 10, 2016, from Philippines battered as Typhoon Koppu barrels in: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-34558887>.
57. Shrivastava, K. (2005). *Broadcast Journalism in The 21st Century.* New Dawn Press.
58. Siapera, E. (2012). *The Handbook of Global Online Journalism.* Wiley-Blackwell.
59. Smith, Craig. 2014. *WhatsApp Statistics.* Digital Statistics and Gadgets, Feb 19. Accessed Sep 27, 2016. <http://expandedramblings.com/index.php/whatsapp-statistics/>.
60. Sommer, B. A. (n.d.). Types of samples. *Types of samples*. UC. Davis. Retrieved Oct 4, 2016, from University of California Davis: <http://psc.dss.ucdavis.edu/faculty_sites//sommerb/sommerdemo/sampling/types.htm>.
61. Specia, Megan. 2015. *WhatsApp offers lifeline for Syrian refugees on journey across Europe.* mashable, July 4. Accessed Sep 27, 2016. <http://mashable.com/2015/07/03/syrians-europe-whatsapp-refugees/#G_Pb71eJbsq1>.
62. Wainaina, E. (2016, January 26). Kenya’s Interior Ministry adopts WhatsApp to Boost Security and Public Interaction. (M. Gicheru, Ed.) Kenya: Techweez.
63. Waldman, Steven. 2011. *THE INFORMATION NEEDS OF COMMUNITIES: The changing media landscape in a broadband age.* Federal Communications Commission.
64. Warren, R. (2015, DECEMBER 6). *Buzz Feed NEWS*. Retrieved APRIL 10, 2016, from Buzz Feed NEWS: <http://www.buzzfeed.com/rossalynwarren/a-syrian-refugee-used-whatsapp-to-share-his-journey-through#.gnyN5PyW3>.
65. WELSH, M. (2015, June 6). Get New York Times WhatsApp Alerts on Pope’s Latin America Trip. New York.
66. Welsh, M. (2015, July 6). *mobile&apps*. (L. H. Owen, Editor, & Nieman Foundation) Retrieved Feb 21, 2016, from NiemanLab: <http://www.niemanlab.org/2015/07/the-new-york-times-is-publishing-on-whatsapp-for-the-first-time-covering-pope-francis/>.
67. Wilson, M. (2014). *Messaging Apps: The New Face of Social Media and What It Means for Brands.* IPG MEDIA LAB.
68. Zelizer, B. (2004). *Taking Journalism Seriously: News and the Academy.* SAGE Publications.