



ICT Adoption and Organisational Performance in Mass Media: A Systematic Literature Review with Reference to Indian Regional Media

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Abstract

This paper offers a systematic review of the literature on the theoretical and empirical studies of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) adoption and organisational performance in mass media organisations, focusing on the media markets of India's regions. The review synthesises the literature across 113 references and across four theories the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Technology-Organisation-Environment (TOE) framework, Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) and Resource-Based View/Dynamic Capabilities theory to situate the state of research, identify the most consistent empirical findings, and outline five key research gaps that inform the core research in the parent doctoral thesis. The review shows that while ICT adoption in mass media organisations is well researched in metropolitan and developed nation settings but the dynamics of ICT adoption and performance in the non-metropolitan, resource-compromised, Indian regional media remains an under-researched topic. Five major gaps are identified and examined: (i) the missing evidence from the Tier-2 cities; (ii) absence of multi-stakeholder integrated designs; (iii) unquantified ICT skills gap between academia and industry; (iv) under-theorised speed-depth paradox in regional newsrooms; (v) unexplored ethical and credibility issues of ICT in regional Indian media. Finally, the article suggests theory, research and practice implications for the field of media and journalism management and digital journalism.

Keywords: ICT Adoption, Organisational Performance, Mass Media, TAM, TOE, Literature Review, Digital Journalism, India, Regional Media, Nashik

1. Introduction

Over the last three decades, one of the most widely researched areas within the domain of information systems and management has been the link between the adoption and performance enhanced by the application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) (Barney, 1991; Davis, 1989; Teece, Pisano & Shuen, 1997; Venkatesh et al., 2003). In media organisations, which are primarily information processing organisations, this relationship is especially pertinent: ICT is the core operational infrastructure through which mass media organisations collect, assess, process and communicate information, and capacity to perform across all key performance parameters is dependent on the quality and degree of strategic congruence of the ICT infrastructure (Küng, 2020; Picard, 2011).

Over the past decade, the world has seen an intensifying reshaping of the global media system as a result of ICT diffusion. The rise of mobile devices, cloud-based content management system (CMS), social media platforms, AI-powered copy editing tools, and digital analytics packages, has reshaped newsroom processes, disrupted existing business models, and transformed the way in which media organisations engage with audiences (Newman et al., 2023; Deuze & Witschge, 2018; Bell & Owen, 2017). This change has been especially significant in India: with 954 million mobile users (TRAI, 2023); a media and entertainment industry worth Rs. The research need and policy concern for this intersection of ICT adoption and organisational performance in Indian mass media is accentuated by 2.3 trillion (FICCI-EY, 2026) and a vernacular digital media landscape that is amongst the fastest-growing in the world.

Yet even as the adoption of ICT by organisations generally, and in media industries and digital journalism in particular, is well-documented, the research around ICT adoption in Indian regional and non-metropolitan (Tier-2 cities) media markets and sectors remains piecemeal, methodologically constrained and little multi-stakeholder focused. The current review of literature was undertaken for the purpose of assessing the current knowledge in this field, identifying the theoretical frameworks that are relevant to the research question, and to define its specific research gaps that are addressed by the attached doctoral thesis.

This paper is structured as follows: Section 2 outlines the review process; Section 3 introduces the four theoretical frameworks relevant to media ICT research; Section 4 synthesises the empirical evidence on ICT adoption in media organisations; Section 5 considers the context of Indian regional media; Section 6 highlights five key research gaps that the associated doctoral thesis directly addresses; and Section 7 offers conclusions and implications.

2. Review Methodology

The literature review was done using the systematic review guidelines of Snyder (2019) for management and media studies. A total of four online databases were searched (JSTOR, Scopus, Google Scholar and ResearchGate), in addition to hand-browsing the reference lists of review articles and reports. The following keywords were used for searching literature: "ICT adoption media organisations" "digital journalism organisational performance" "technology acceptance mass media" "CMS newsroom" "mobile journalism India" "regional media ICT" "Indian print media digitisation" and combinations of all of the above.

We searched for sources published between 2000 and 2026, with older landmark theoretical sources (Davis, 1989; Barney, 1991; Tornatzky & Fleischer, 1990) cited regardless of their date of publication because of their role in theoretical development. A total of 113 sources were reviewed and cited in the doctoral thesis, including: peer-reviewed journal articles (n = 68), edited book chapters (n = 14), books (n = 12), industry reports (n = 11), government publications (n = 5) and conference proceedings (n = 3).

Sources were included if they: (a) explicitly addressed issues related to ICT adoption, digital transformation, media technology; (b) addressed organisational performance, competitive advantage, quality of content, audience share or reach (as specific outcomes of ICT adoption); and/or (c) specifically referred to the Indian media context, or offered theories that could

be applied to the context. Sources were excluded if they only focused on end user technology adoption with no organisational implications, or if publications were not accessible in English or Marathi.

3. Theoretical Frameworks

3.1 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM, Davis 1989) is based on Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) Theory of Reasoned Action and posits that the adoption of a technology is explained by two key user perceptions: Perceived Usefulness (PU) the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) the degree to which the person believes that using the system would be free of effort. These perceptions affect attitudes towards using the technology, which affect the intention to use and behaviour.

TAM has been rigorously tested in various technology adoption settings (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000) and in the media and journalism adoption of ICT tools by Chadha and Koliska (2015), Garrison (2016), and Sharma and Srivastava (2021), for example. TAM offers the central theoretical framework for understanding the reasons why individual journalists and editors choose or refuse to use particular ICTs and the concept of perceived usefulness in particular aligns with the conceptualisation of the effect of ICTs on performance.

Criticism of TAM includes a narrow conceptualisation of adoption that considers only individual factors, ignoring organisational and environmental factors (Tornatzky & Fleischer, 1990). This is offset by the use the TOE and RBV approaches.

3.2 Technology-Organisation-Environment (TOE) Framework

The Technology-Organisation-Environment framework (Tornatzky & Fleischer, 1990) posits that the uptake and adoption of organisational technologies is influenced by three contextual factors: (a) the technological context, which represents technologies available to the organisation (internal and external); (b) the organisational context, which includes size, structure, management practices and human capital; and (c) the environmental context, which includes industry structure, nature of competition, and regulatory environment.

The TOE model has been successfully applied for studying organisational ICT adoption in the context of SMEs and media organisations in developing countries (Bryan, Ariff & Lim, 2021; Smit, van der Berg & Wilkinson, 2023; Setiawan, Maulida & Suryadi, 2024). In the current research the TOE framework is used at the unit of analysis individual media organisations in Nashik City to explain the differences in ICT adoption between digital, television and print media organisations despite their common proximity and industry/city environment.

An important contribution of the TOE-inspired analysis of this study is that it confirms the environmental constraints especially government advertising dependency and owner commercial influence of the TOE framework rather than enabling factors for ICT-driven competitive advantage, extending the basic TOE framework.

3.3 Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT)

The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), put forward by Venkatesh, Morris, Davis, and Davis (2003), synthesises eight previous theories of technology acceptance, and postulates technology use as influenced by four factors: performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions. Venkatesh, Thong and Xu (2012) expanded UTAUT to include hedonic motivation, price value and habit (UTAUT2).

UTAUT is important to the current study's focus on reporters and journalism students whose decision to use technology is influenced by both performance expectancies and social influences in their newsroom and news educational environments and to the HOD instrument's focus on facilitating conditions (ICT infrastructure, funding) as a predictor of journalism education performance.

3.4 Resource-Based View and Dynamic Capabilities Theory

According to the Resource-Based View (RBV) of the firm (Barney, 1991) firms sustain competitive advantage through the unique possession of valuable, rare, inimitable and non-substitutable (VRIN) resources. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) capabilities as a combination of hardware, software, skills, procedures can be VRIN resources if they are integrated into routines and have been built up over time through investments (Chan-Olmsted, 2006; Kung, 2020).

Dynamic Capabilities theory (Teece, Pisano & Shuen, 1997) is a further development of RBV, which focuses on the competitive implications of fast-paced technological change. Dynamic capabilities as the capacity to sense, seize and reconfigure resources to adapt to environmental change are relevant in the context of media firms transitioning to digital platforms. The case study finding that Loksatta's "Savisthar" programme is a re.configuration of dynamic capabilities using ICT for depth extension rather than depth erosion is positioned within this framework in the main thesis.

4. Empirical Evidence on ICT Adoption in Media Organisations

4.1 ICT Tools and Newsroom Performance

The empirical evidence on ICT adoption in media organisations consistently shows multiple gains in performance. Cherubini and Nielsen (2016) have documented efficiency gains in targeting, engagement and revenue from the adoption of audience analytics tools in European news organisations. Coddington (2020) traced the use of computational journalism tools data mining, algorithmic analysis, and automatic reporting in enhancing the investigative powers of the digital-native newsrooms. Pavlik (2022) offers the most comprehensive review of AI use in journalism, detailing the efficiencies of content production and the risks of standardisation and a homogenisation of publisher voice.

In broadcast news, Garrison (2016) found using online databases benefited newspaper journalists by giving them a better chance of conduct high-quality research and developing more extensive source lists. Hermida (2020) chronicles the role of Twitter and social media in reinventing sourcing, offering rapid access to on-scene eyewitness accounts, as well as leads from the general public, albeit with the added risk of misinformation and confirmation bias.

The mobile journalism (MoJo) literature is especially relevant to Nashik City, where budgets restrict media organisations from investing in conventional broadcast capabilities. Broersma and Graham (2012) show the use of mobile devices as the dominant newsgathering platform, and Bharti, Singh, and Kumar (2025) report that in India the adoption of smartphones for journalism practice is associated with a shortening of news cycle times, and reduced cost of producing a story: it is found to be the information and communication technology (ICT) innovation with the best cost-to-benefit ratio for smaller and medium-sized regional news organisations.

4.2 The Speed-Depth Paradox

A common finding in empirical studies of ICT use in journalism is the paradox between gains in speed of production and loss of investigative capacity a paradox the research presented here calls the "speed-depth paradox". Bell and Owen (2017) attribute the decline in investigative journalism to the "always-on" digital news cycle facilitated by CMS and social media. Sambrook (2021) proposes that the 24-hour news cycle induces structures that incentivise the production of fast, lightweight, emotionally stimulating stories over slow, credible, depth stories.

Tandoc (2014) empirically documents this phenomenon, showing how the use of audience analytics software in online newsrooms reshapes editorial decisions: editors who track audience engagement metrics make different decisions for the coverage of a story over those who do not, with the former's decisions preferencing high-interest (war, celebrity, sport) over high-interest (policy, governance, local government) news. Usher (2020) broadens this analysis to explain how algorithmic media intermediation creates incentives for clickbaiting independent of editorial considerations.

The speed-depth paradox detailed in the present study in which 86 percent of Nashik reporters report that pressure to update digital news stories every day limits their capacity to research and investigate is the first empirical study of this process in a Tier-2 Indian media market.

4.3 ICT and Editorial Capture

The media political economy literature is a valuable extension of the organisational performance literature in documenting the ways in which structure ownership, advertising and political relations shapes the relationship between ICT uptake and media quality. Thussu (2019) describes the co-alignment of Indian media and broader political-economic forces, and concludes that capture presents a greater barrier to quality news than the technical constraints.

Wardle and Derakhshan (2017) offer the most prominent model for the information disorder ecosystem (a combination of mis, dis and mal information) in which digital media organisations operate. Their work is directly relevant to this study's findings about clickbait, with 91.7 percent of Nashik editor respondents admitting that their media use clickbait, and 77.6 percent of viewer respondents acknowledging that they see clickbait practices.

5. ICT in Indian Regional Media: Specific Context

5.1 The Indian Media Landscape

India has the largest and most diverse media ecosystem in the world, with more than 100,000 registered newspapers, some 900 satellite TV channels, and a growing digital media sector (FICCI-EY, 2026; Government of India, 2023). The media ecosystem is characterised by the deepest degree of resource diversity, ownership structure and linguistic diversity, with the most advanced metropolitan media organisations boasting Peterbald ICT systems and powerful global partnerships, while regional and vernacular media which serve by far the largest aggregate audience in India often lack investment in ICT systems, training and infrastructure.

Jeffrey (2019) offers a detailed historical account of the newspaper revolution in India the rapid expansion of regional language print media from the 1970s to the 2000s and describes the dilemma over the need for technological modernisation versus the lack of resources among smaller regional publishers. Kumar (2018) tracks the digital reform process in the Indian press and shows that substantial investment in ICT infrastructure is prevented by an uncontrolled dependency on advertising revenue among regional print media a finding reinforced by the present study's documentation of government advertising dependency as a moderating factor on the impact of ICT on national competitiveness.

5.2 Maharashtra and Nashik City Media Context

Marathi, the language of the state of Maharashtra, is the home of one of India's largest, most competitive and most technologically advanced vernacular media sectors. Kohli-Khandekar (2020) describes competition in the state's print media market, dominated by three major publications (Lokmat, Maharashtra Times, Sakal) and hundreds of regional and district publications competing for market share in geographically overlapping markets. Television markets are dominated by Marathi news channels (ABP Majha, Zee 24 Taas, TV9 Marathi) competing for audiences across the region, including in Tier-2 cities like Nashik.

Nashik City, with a population of over 1.5 million (Census of India, 2011) and an improving industrial and commercial sector, is a typical Tier-2 Maharashtra media market: sufficiently large to support a vibrant media sector including multiple print publications, broadcast and digital media platforms, but lacking resources to compete with the Pune and Mumbai markets. Patil (2022) is the only existing study on mobile journalism adoption in the Maharashtra media market (Pune); no previous study has mapped adoption and performance of ICTs in the Nashik City market.

5.3 Journalism Education and the Academic-Industry Gap

The need to address the skills gap in ICT competencies between academia and media industries is a structural weakness of regional Indian media as much discussed as little empirically documented. Rao (2020) reports on journalism education in India, documenting a gap in curriculum update in most journalism education programs that tracks three to five years behind the evolution of ICT tools used in journalism. This is especially true in journalism education in Tier-2 cities, which face the problems of laboratory provision, limited budget, and lack of Faculty Development Programmes (FDPs) to complement curricula design.

The University Grants Commission (2022) curriculum framework for undergraduate education highlights digital skills and ICT literacy as key graduate attributes for journalists, but this framework has an uneven implementation. This study is the first to empirically measure this gap in Nashik City: 75 percent of journalism HODs indicated no dedicated budget for ICT in their department and Faculty Development Programmes (FDPs) in current digital journalism technologies were offered only "rarely" across all surveyed institutions.

6. Research Gaps

The systematic review of 113 sources reveals five significant research gaps that collectively constitute the research lacuna addressed by the associated doctoral thesis.

Gap 1: Tier-2 City Context Under-Examined

There has been no previous systematic empirical research on ICT use and its impact on performance in the mass media of a Tier-2 Indian city. The current Indian media-ICT research is dominated by the metropolitan markets (Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru, Hyderabad) and English/Hindi language media. The peculiar context of ICT adoption in non-metropolitan markets, in Marathi-dominated, resource-limited regional media ecosystems that cater to the majority of the population in Maharashtra state, with different competitive, regulatory and financial pressures and requirements has not been empirically explored.

Gap 2: Multi-Stakeholder Research Design Absent

Prior research in Indian media on ICT has been either limitedly quantitative surveying only media professionals without eliciting audience perspectives or qualitative, either with a single organisation or media CEO without a representative sample. Not a single study has devoted attention to the stakeholders - editors, journalists, viewers, teachers and students in a unified mixed-methods design, despite their obvious connection with explaining ecosystem-level ICT adoption in a regional news environment.

Gap 3: Academic-Industry ICT Skills Gap Not Empirically Quantified

Although normative debate on curriculum reform is rife in Indian journalism education, no empirical research has gauged the capability gap between the ICT skills required by regional media newsrooms and provided by associated journalistic courses and evaluated the quality implications of this mismatch. A lack of empirical evidence constrains the policy case for curriculum reform and for increased ICT investment in journalism education.



Gap 4: Speed-Depth Paradox Not Theorised in Tier-2 Indian Context

The paradox of speed versus depth loss in newsrooms due to ICT use has been conceptualised and debated mainly in relation to digital native and urban newsrooms in developed nations (Bell & Owen, 2017; Sambrook, 2021; Tandoc, 2014). The possibilities and trade-offs between speed and depth in resourced-poor regional newsrooms where journalists are both poorly resourced and under-trained in using ICT reporting skills, escalating this paradox have not been empirically explored in India.

Gap 5: Ethical and Credibility Dimensions of ICT in Regional Media Unexplored

The convergence of digital publishing systems, social media incentive structures, and revenue-driven advertising demands on clickbait content, information quality, and mitigation of misinformation in Indian regional newsrooms has not been empirically analysed, either. While these are theoretically identified in the literature (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017; Tandoc et al., 2021), the empirical extent of these and the management responses available to regional media managers are unstudied.

7. Discussion and Implications

The five gaps identified in the current review collectively represent a sizeable and coherent gap in the ICT-media performance literature. They have a common structural aspect: the nature of available literature has been shaped by the technological and managerial realities of contemporary metropolitan and developed-country media organisation, and the concepts and empirical generalisations derived from them can't easily be transferred to the Tier-2 Indian regional media context.

The ramifications of this gap are both practical and theoretical. Media managers in regional India cannot develop evidence-based ICT investment strategies to guide their organisations on the basis of evidence drawn from metropolitan and developed countries without committing a systematic miss-match between investment and organisational needs. Journalism academics cannot offer evidence-based curricula in the absence of empirical evidence documenting competency gap. Government policy makers cannot design media development policies in the absence of empirical evidence of the structural constraints (knowingly, the peculiar Indian media market struggles with advertising dependency and editorial capture) that mediate the ICT-performance outcome in regional media markets.

The current doctoral study fills all five gaps through a rigorous, multi-strand, sequential explanatory mixed-methods study that speaks directly to the empirical gaps identified in this review. The research, based in Nashik City with a multi-stakeholder research design involving six groups of respondents, and combining quantitative regression analysis (for generalisability) with qualitative thematic analysis (to contextualise) of interviews with newspaper editors, provides the first systematic account of ICT diffusion and organisational performance in a Tier-2 Indian media market.

8. Conclusion

This systematic review has outlined the current state of understanding on how ICT adoption and organisational performance relate in mass media organisations, with specific regard to the Indian regional media. Through an analysis of 113 sources across four different theories Technology Adoption Model (TAM), Technology-Organisation-Environment (TOE), Unified Theory of Adoption and Use of Technology (UTAUT), and Resource-based View (RBV) / Dynamic Capabilities the review has confirmed that ICT adoption is linked with organisational performance gains in multiple dimensions, as well as with multiple risks such as the speed-depth paradox, editorial capture, and clickbait risks that reduce journalistic quality and democratic transparency.

Five key research gaps were identified: research has overlooked the Tier-2 city context; multi-stakeholder design is absent; there is an unquantified ICT skills gap between academia and the regional mass media industry; the speed-depth paradox in regional newsrooms is untheorised; and the ethical and credibility implications of ICT in regional Indian mass media have

not been addressed. These five research gaps represent the gap in knowledge that the doctoral thesis addresses through a sequential explanatory mixed-methods study of ICT adoption and performance in Nashik City's mass media organisations.

The wider significance of this review for the study of media management lies in the realisation that, while the empirical literature has favoured metropolitan and developed country environments, the majority of the world's media consumers who are served by regional, vernacular, resource-limited organisations in the Global South - have yet to be suitably served by research literature. The current study helps address this bias.

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