



## QUANTITATIVE VS QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN: WHAT NIGERIAN COMMUNICATION SCHOLARS PREFER?

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### Abstract

Research is an activity of knowing, with the core objectives of to find solutions to problems and find answers to questions through the application of a reliable and consistent procedure. To be reliable and consistent, research method must be accessible, transparent, systematic, verifiable, objective, transferable, cumulative and rigorous. It is useful for research method to meet the above stated criteria because as a public activity, research procedure must be clear in structure, in process and in outcome—such as the processes must be opened to scrutiny by others. Research in Communication and media studies is an ongoing activity and it is constantly evolving and moving from questions about the use of the medium to the questions of technological improvement of the medium to profitably serve the users of the medium, who are also constantly changing in terms of demographics, taste, orientation and values. The focus of this paper therefore, is to determine the research methodology which is most commonly used in communication and media studies. It is also to examine the influence of single and multiple authors in the choice of either the qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods. Employing descriptive quantitative design, the authors used content analysis as a tool to code and analysed the data set. Published scholarly articles available on Google scholar between 2020 and 2021 constituted the study population. Taro Yamane formula was used to draw a sample size of 392 from a population of 21,000. Findings showed that scholars



in the field prefer quantitative methodology, and multiple authors were standard among the publications in the period under review. It is recommended that communication researchers explore the possibility of adopting alternative approaches other than quantitative methods. Regarding the debate on the number of authors as it concerns scholarly articles, it is submitted that more research is needed to ascertain further benefits of singular and multiple authors, aside from the obvious advantages from both sides currently being put forward.

**Keywords:** Research Methods, Qualitative, Quantitative, Mixed-method, Communication scholars

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#### **Introduction**

Research is an activity of knowing, with the core objectives of to find solutions to problems and find answers to questions through the application of are liable and consistent procedure. To be reliable and consistent, research method must be accessible, transparent, systematic, verifiable, objective, transferable, cumulative and rigorous. It is useful for research method to meet the above stated criteria because as a public activity, research procedure must be clear in structure, in process and in outcome—such as the processes must be opened to scrutiny by others. Research In Communication and media studies is an ongoing activity and it is constantly evolving and moving from questions about the use of the medium to the questions of technological improvement of the medium to profitably serve the users of the medium, who are also constantly changing in terms of demographics, taste, orientation and values. Nevertheless, Wimmer and Dominick(2011) argue that technological advances and innovation, as well as industrialisation, large business, and global politics, contributed to the development of radio, television, satellites, and computer networking Hence, the need for interdisciplinary approach in media research, whereby the sociological and psychological factors underlying the social and emotional behavior of media audience are investigated for profitable outcomes. Generally,



it has been observed that the interpretive scholars frequently adopt the qualitative research method, while the social scientists adopt the quantitative method.

Broadly, the interest of communication scholars was directed at understanding the development and dynamics of the medium and how it offers alternatives to the already existing communication system (Wimmer and Dominick 2011). Further interest in communication research by researchers was in the audience's use of the medium for information and entertainment. Thirdly researchers also sought to understudy how the medium impacts the audience. According to Pandey & Pandey (2021), the fourth level of study covered a wide range of policy research. This level, for example, included research on how to structure the medium to make it more helpful or significant in the realm of communication. Researchers at the highest level concentrated on the positive effects of technological advancements on the medium. The term "research" refers to the process of gathering data. Research is a one-of-a-kind contribution to the body of knowledge that advances it. Research, observation, comparison, and experimentation are all used to find the truth. In a word, research is the methodical and objective pursuit of knowledge. (Nayak, Singh, and Nayak, 2021).

#### **Statement of the Problem**

Even though communication scholars use different types of research methodology (Qualitative, Quantitative and Mix-method), to arrive at a logical conclusion; there seems to be a debate in determining which is the most preferably among the research methodologies. In this regard, this study examines the research methodology commonly used in communication and media research.

#### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to unearth which research methodologies are preferable to researchers and scholars in the communication and media studies field.

#### **Research Questions**

This study is undertaken to answer the following questions:

1. What is Nigerian scholars' most commonly used research methodology in communication and media research?
2. Which is preferable: single or multiple authors in research and report publication?
3. What is the preferable research instrument used in communication and media research?



## **Review of Related Literature**

### **Conceptualising Research in Communication studies**

Several scholars in diverse disciplines have sought to give the understanding to research as a phenomenon and have succeeded in explaining what the concept means. All the definitions seek to clarify one thing—the need to 'search' for knowledge in solving problems. A search for information is referred to as "research." Research is a one-of-a-kind contribution to the corpus of knowledge that helps it grow. It is the process of conducting an investigation, observation, comparison, and experimentation to discover the truth. In a word, research is the objective and systematic pursuit of knowledge through the process of discovering a solution to a problem. (Nayak et al., 2021).

Research is also a rigorous and methodical search for helpful knowledge on a specific topic. It is a method of scientific investigation and an art form (Bernard, 2006). The application of the scientific method in issue resolution is also sometimes referred to as research. It is a means of carrying out the scientific method of analysis in a systematic, formal, and intensive manner.

Research is core in media studies and the evolving nature of the mass media, aided by technology has changed the mode of interaction between the media and its audience. The situation leads to a constant search to understand the medium's dynamism, audience, and interrelatedness with other fields of human endeavour. According to Priest (2010), media research is the study of the operation of the mass media (radio, television, newspapers, magazines, among others.) using scientific methodologies. One thing about media research is that it is inextricably linked to other fields. This is because the media is intertwined with other life events. Despite the increasing complexity of media research, several focus areas can still be identified.

### **Considering Research Methods in Communication Studies**

Amongst the popular research methods in communication studies, certain factors are critical to a researcher's choice of methodology. According to Holden and Lynch (2015), researchers must remember that the question of "What to research?" can significantly impact methodological choice. Therefore their philosophical examination also prompts a consideration of the research topic. Researchers should be aware that certain philosophical beliefs may restrict them from exploring a particular research subject, as the approach used may be improper for the problem at hand.



Furthermore, in communication studies, choosing the research methodology for a study is not done haphazardly; since research is a scientific process, certain factors must be considered before concluding on the methodology that best suits a phenomenon under study to assume a state of credibility. As a result, Holden and Lynch (2015) narrate that inappropriate methodology used for the research topic might lead to erroneous results, harming the researcher's professionalism and the authority of research science.

Certain factors are believed to influence the choice of methodology. First is the research goal. According to Coll & Chapman (2000), the question of research methodology selection is best answered by addressing the more fundamental issue of research design. According to Patton (1990), the research question or purpose should determine whether methodology or a combination of methodologies is best (cited in Coll & Chapman, 2000).

Statistical significance is another factor that informs a researcher's choice in methodology. Coll & Chapman (2000) revealed that a quantitative approach is engaged in a study where researchers require apparent and extremely high data-based research results or statistical answers. For instance, the survey method is best when measuring audience perception of specific media content.

Another critical factor that determines the choice of methods is the sample size. The extent of the sample size, for instance, for a large population of about 1000, will affect the choice of the research instrument. Face-to-face interviews might be time-consuming, so that a survey may be a better option.

Another essential issue to consider while choosing a research approach is time availability. The methods and strategies that allow data gathering in just a few days could be informed by the results needed inside the research frame. Random or convenience sampling, for example, can be a favoured data collection approach (Hesse-Biber, 2018). Because the required data collecting period is so long, you may choose to conduct in-person interviews with your samples.

### **Qualitative and Quantitative Methodology in Communication studies**

Generally, qualitative research has been given greater attention by scholars and academia in communication and media studies. This strategy, which is based on interpretivist traditions, requires immersing oneself in a scene and striving to make sense of it—whether at a business meeting, a community festival, or an interview. Qualitative researchers assess and record little cues to determine how to act, as well as make sense of the situation and develop larger knowledge



claims about the culture. According to Scharp and Sanders (2019), the goal of qualitative research is to gain a better understanding of the social reality. The ever-changing and evolving nature of our world constantly puts researchers in a race to seek to understand how humans and phenomena interact with each other. Flick (2009) affirms researchers' use of qualitative methods to observe events or situations that affect people.

Qualitative research approaches take many social sciences' cues, especially anthropology. This study method is being investigated to respect people's subjective experiences and meaning-making processes (Flick, 2009). These methods enable researchers to understand a subject thoroughly by delving into the meanings people attach to their daily actions, situations, circumstances, people, and objects.

In his studies about qualitative research methods, Blackwell (2013) gave an extensive account of the strength of qualitative research and why researchers appreciate it. According to Blackwell (2013), researchers use qualitative research because of its strength. The method is ideal for researching situations in which one is personally interested but has never had a "legitimate" reason to enter. Qualitative data often highlights cultural practices that would otherwise be overlooked in organised surveys or studies.

Consequently, the field approach used in qualitative research may lead to close and trustworthy relationships that encourage a level of transparency not seen in self-reports or snapshot evaluations of a scene. As a result, qualitative research can reveal essential topics that can be investigated further using more organised methodologies. Unsurprisingly, researchers in the field of communication have adopted this strategy. Such work can provide insight into neglected, stereotyped, or unknown populations—a glimpse into worlds that are often guarded and an opportunity to tell a tale that few people are aware of. Lindemann's (2010) work with homeless street sellers in San Francisco selling newspapers to make ends meet was an example of this.

Furthermore, and probably most crucially, in an increasingly complicated environment, communication becomes critical to comprehending individuals and our world. As a result, as Blackwell (2013) suggests, good in communication studies, qualitative research aids people in comprehending the world, its institutions and society. A qualitative approach may benefit humanity by giving information that answers societal concerns, questions, or problems.



Qualitative researchers use a range of methods to collect data. In-depth interviews, participant observation, ethnography, textual analysis, in-depth case studies, focus group discussions, and research methodologies with their roots in the arts are among the most common. In conclusion, a qualitative researcher is flexible in his approach and actively engages with the participants to perceive things from their perspective.

### **Quantitative Research Methodology in Communication Studies**

Quantitative research entails "collecting primary data from a large number of people, often in order to extrapolate the conclusions to a larger population" (Bennett, 1996:125). According to Scharrer and Ramasubramanian (2021), quantitative research refers to a study in which communication phenomena are quantified or counted. Quantitative approaches use numerical data collecting and analysis to investigate human communication phenomena. Physical science research methods highly influence them. Quantitative research produces objective facts that may be expressed using numbers and statistics.

Quantitative research is typically conducted on a representative sample of a target population to generalise the findings to the entire population. Quantitative research "tends to be explanatory, especially when experiments are involved, or it seeks to use exact statistical models to gain full understandings of human communication (as in survey studies and public opinion polls)," according to Reinard (2001). Although quantitative research has its history as a science-based discipline, communication researchers have come to adopt this method of scientific approach because of its advantage. According to Priest (2010), many communication researchers explore human communication phenomena using research approaches borrowed from the physical sciences. Reinard (2001) supports this viewpoint by stating that academics frequently use quantitative research approaches to understand communication behaviour by examining processes that allow them to predict future behaviour.

Quantitative research is also helpful in identifying similarities and contrasts across groups of people or communication events (Cohen, 2012). Examples show that quantitative methodologies are utilised to find trends and patterns of communicative behaviour for different groups in the disciplines of gender and communication, culture and communication, and ethnicity and communication. While these trends and patterns cannot be applied to everyone, in all situations, at all times, they do help us understand what factors influence how we communicate (Scharrer and Ramasubramanian 2021).



On one side of the balancing act, researchers (Leavy, 2017; Brunson, 2016; Reinard, 2001 & Guo, 2015) suggest that knowing and applying the steps of the scientific method will assist the researcher to minimise unintended bias in data collecting and analysis. Many aspects of the scientific method, such as using logical reasoning to develop and test hypotheses, collecting representative samples, and reporting on aggregates rather than individual cases, can all be regarded as ways to reduce the impact of researcher subjectivity. Each of these standards reduces the influence of researchers in the research process and the data produced.

Within the topic of quantitative research, there are many different methodologies. The most commonly used approaches are experiments, surveys, content analysis, and meta-analysis. Quantitative tools are supposed to be used by researchers to achieve progress toward a more just and equal world. Numbers and statistical analysis sway many people, which is essential. According to Allen and Preiss (1997) in their book *The Power of Numbers for Social Justice*, many people are persuaded by numbers and statistical analysis. As a result, academics can employ quantitative methodologies to make progress toward a more just and equal world. This shows how quantitative research can raise awareness, generate concern, test potential remedies, and address social justice issues and themes. For many social scientific and policy-oriented studies, quantification remains the 'gold standard.' Cohen (2012) found that while assessing the nature of quantitative research. This is because numerical data is frequently regarded as trustworthy, unbiased, and verifiable. We can extrapolate from the preceding that quantitative techniques rely significantly on physical science research methods to investigate human communication phenomena through the gathering and analysing of numerical data.

Quantitative and qualitative techniques to inquiry each have their benefits and drawbacks. "The advantage of the quantitative technique is that it is possible to assess the reactions of many participants to a small number of questions, thus facilitating comparison and statistical aggregation of data," Coll & Chapman (2000) write. In contrast to quantitative inquiries, a qualitative technique usually produces a plethora of comprehensive data about a much smaller number of people and circumstances. As a result, depending on the topic of interest, researchers may find it more beneficial to conduct a more in-depth inquiry with fewer individuals to learn more about specific concerns. On the other hand, most quantitative studies aim to increase confidence in generalising study findings. The sampling method used significantly impacts the validity of such generalisations. The choice of approach for the researcher is frequently a trade-off between breadth and depth.





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### **Mixed-method: The Incompatibility Thesis?**

Because of the contrasts between the two research methods, some academics have proposed that they are intrinsically incompatible and should not be combined in a single study; this is known as the incompatibility thesis (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Given the complexity of today's society, a single research approach may not be sufficient to handle the most complex societal problems. Kaplan and Duchon (1988) also believe that using a paradigm synthesis and combining qualitative and quantitative research approaches will produce more robust research findings that may effectively solve social problems.

Mixed methods tend to address traditional friction by encouraging hybrid approaches. Several factors determine the suitability of a research method. According to Ojebode et al. (2018), these factors include the nature of the research problem, the research objectives' ability to address policy gaps, and the existence of similar problems that have been successfully explored with specific methods.

### **Mixed Methodology in Research**

In communication research, mixed methods research is also prevalent. It entails gathering, evaluating, and incorporating quantitative and qualitative data into a single project (Scharp and Sanders) (2019). A research project's phases are intertwined or synergistic, with the quantitative phase impacting the qualitative phase and vice versa (Hesse-Biber, 2018). Mixed methods research is a type of study that combines quantitative and qualitative methodologies in one project. Quantitative and qualitative methods could be employed in sequence at different project stages or combined simultaneously (Creswell, 2003). In social justice research, mixed-methods approaches are frequently utilised to explore, comprehend, evaluate, and bring about collective action and social change. Since mixed-method research accommodates a combination of quantitative and qualitative data, the topic under examination may therefore be thoroughly understood. This method is suitable for describing, explaining, or evaluating and is believed to offer a robust result (Ojebode et al., 2018).

Mixed methods research is also widespread in applied social and behavioural science research, such as that targeted at promoting community change or social action (Branthwaite and Patterson, 2011). When a researcher uses a mixed-methods approach, he or she will end up with a research study that incorporates two or more of the ways described above. In many circumstances, researchers will mix two methodologies to analyse the same issue in the same study.



According to Branthwaite and Patterson, researchers will sometimes use qualitative methodologies to generate quantitative research, such as a researcher who uses a focus group to test the validity of a survey before it is finalised (2011). Mixed methods research provides a complete view of a communication phenomenon by collecting data and information in many ways (Creswell, 2003). Mixed methods have been embraced by researchers in diverse research fields, including communication, and it has been argued that it helps better understand the phenomenon being studied.

As a result of the growing demand for research that may successfully address policy gaps, Ojebode et al. (2018) believe that researchers must embrace a mixed-methods approach. According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), the mixed methods approach is now considered the new research paradigm, particularly in social and behavioural science research.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is underpinned by the Rational choice theory, which is an assumption for the behaviour and decisions of individuals in varied contexts but is also applicable in several fields such as sociology, communication, political science and philosophy.

The theory assumes that individuals employ rational estimation to arrive at rational choices geared toward outcomes that speak to their personal goals. The resultant outcome of rational choice is associated with increasing an individual's self-interest. In effect, rational choice is an anticipated outcome that provides individuals with superlative satisfaction and benefits in the presence of limited options available. The economist Adam Smith, in his 1776 book: "An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations," was one of the early scholars to have developed the underlying principles of the theory. Smith expounded on the concept of self-interest and the invisible hand theory in his treatise.

The underlying goal of rational choice theory is to expound on why and how individuals or groups make particular choices on account of specific input and rewards. The theory postulates that individuals librate their options and make decisions considered to serve them best—employing the concept of self-interests in choices that provide them with the most significant benefits.

The relevance of this theory to the study at hand is axiomatic to the researchers' objective on account that most times, researchers already have a self-interest in the process of choosing a particular research design or instrument in the course of their study. In



conducting a study, the researcher needs to engage with the relevant literature relevant to his area of study until he is assured of the research question and the essential theory and concepts pertinent to the research question (Asenahabi, 2019).

According to Levin & Milgrom (2004), in ideal circumstances, rational choice is seen as the process of determining what options are available, leading to the choice of the most preferred one according to a set of conditions— a model that is an optimization-based approach. Consequently, rational choice theory lies in the idea that individuals have preferences and choose according to available options, as done by researchers.

### **Research Methodology**

The quantitative descriptive survey is the research design adopted for the study. Descriptive research describes the characteristics of a population or phenomenon under study and does not concern itself with the why questions but instead can focus on the characteristics and addresses the what, where, when and how questions. In other words, what are the characteristics of the phenomenon, population or situation under study? As opined by McCombes (2020), "Descriptive research is an appropriate choice when the research aim is to identify characteristics, frequencies, trends, and categories."

### **Population Of The Study**

The population of the study consists of scholarly articles in communication and media studies published in the field of Nigeria in the years 2020 and 2021 and are available on Google Scholar. In determining the population of study for the research and having decided on the source for data gathering; several queries on Google Scholar with the search term, "scholarly articles in communication and media studies published on Nigeria in the year 2020 and 2021" yielded 21,000 results, which the authors adopted as the population of the study. After extensive reading and analysis through several pages of Google scholar on the subject matter, this figure revealed that some articles are not principally on communication and media studies but adjunct research reports, such as by social scientists or health-related experts reporting on communication issues.

Therefore, using the Taro Yamane formula:  $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$ , a sample size of 392 was arrived at. Where:

$n$  = Desired Sample Size,  $N$ = Population Size,  $e$ = Level of Significance,  $1$ = Constant Value.

Therefore, the population of Academic articles on Google scholar is = 21,000

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$$n = 21000/1 + 21000(0.05)^2$$
$$n = 21000/1 + 21000 \times 0.0025$$
$$n = 21000/1 + 52.5$$
$$n = 21000/ 53.5$$
$$n = 392$$

### **Research Instrument**

Content analysis was employed to conduct a qualitative analysis of the contents and code the data. Articles were read, analysed and quantitatively coded using units of analysis: research design—qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods; research instrument/method—survey/questionnaire, content analysis, interview, exploratory, focus group discussion and phenomenological; the year of publications—2020 and 2021 and finally the categories of authors—single, two and multiple.

As it concerns intercoder reliability, the authors have agreed that a table should be used to code the data using the earlier mentioned units of analysis. At the same time, pie charts are used to present percentages of all categories. Three hundred and ninety two articles in the period under review were analysed, covering several communication and media research areas such as broadcasting, development journalism, online, print journalism, theories, advertising and public relations. The data is to answer the research questions: (i). What is Nigerian scholars' most commonly used research methodology in communication and media research? (ii). Which is preferable: single or multiple authors in research and report publication? And What is the preferable research instrument used in communication and media research?

### **4.0 Result/Presentation**

**Table i: categories of data set. Source: field data, February 2022.**

Item	Sub-Item	Frequency	Per centage %
Research Design	Qualitative	124	31.6
	Mix Method	102	26.1
	Quantitative	166	42.3
Method/Instrument	Survey/Questionnaire	173	44.1
	Interview	55	14.0
	Content Analysis	115	29.3
	Exploratory	18	4.6
	Focus Group Discussion	19	4.8
	Phenomenological	12	3.1
Year of Publication	2020	184	46.9
	2021	208	53.1
Authors	Single	92	23.5
	Two	106	27.0
	Multiple	194	49.5

## Discussion

According to the Table, of the 392 samples, 184 articles and 208 articles were published in 2020 and 2021, respectively. As regards research design, 124 papers adopted qualitative design, 102 employed mixed methods, while 166 research was conducted using a quantitative design. On the tools used for these studies, research employing phenomenological qualitative instruments were 12; focus group discussion and exploratory tool papers had 19 and 18 respectively. Mean while studies that employed interviews as instruments were 55; content analysis and survey/Questionnaire were 115 and 173 respectively. Moreover, papers having multiple authors were 194, the ones with two authors, 106 and single-author papers, 92.

## Regarding Research Design

Our findings show that most articles that used quantitative design for their study employed a survey method and a questionnaire. Some articles in the category also heavily use content analysis. Qualitative design primarily uses FGD, discourse and thematic analysis, interviews and exploratory methods. According to data (figure i), 42.3% of scholarly papers published in communication and media research employ a quantitative research design. While qualitative and Mixed methods were 31.6% and 26.0%, respectively.



Though the quantitative research method is the design of choice for research in the natural and physical sciences, social sciences fields such as communication and media studies have generally adopted the methodology in their studies, especially in Nigeria. This finding is inconsonant with what several research findings in the industry have being. According to Ukonu and his colleagues in their study, "it can be concluded that quantitative method is the most adopted method by communication researchers and are not employed alone for analysis by researchers" (Ukonu et al., 2018).

According to Amadi (2014), teachers who teach research methods courses in mass communication programs in Nigerian universities and colleges appear to gravitate almost entirely towards the quantitative research approach. "Either bad faith or ignorance, or a mix of the two, has prevented Nigerian universities from joining the global network of universities where methodological pluralism in social research has been the norm," he concluded.

Percentage of Research Design Employed

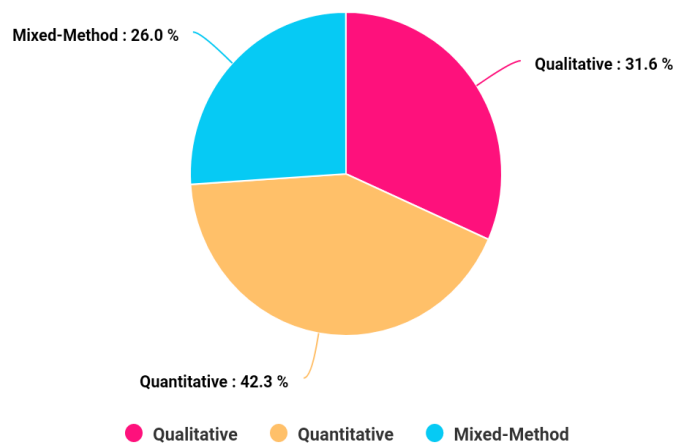


Figure i: percentage of Research Design employed. Source: field data, February 2022

#### Regarding Research Method/Instrument

It is interesting to note that from data analysis, researchers in the field of communication may have avoided employing research tools such as observation, experiment, case study, grounded theory and ethnography methods in their studies. Figures point in the direction that surveys and questionnaires are the most common research tools employed by Nigerian scholars in the studies—this stands at 44.1% of the lot, while content analysis is followed with 29.3%. A mere 14.0% of

studies adopted the interview method, and phenomenological, FGD, and exploratory got 3.1%, 4.6 and 4.8% respectively (figure ii). This means that Studies that used survey and questionnaire methods are three times the combined figure of the three methods and about 1.1% different from those who employed the interview method and twice the figure of studies that used content analysis.

Again, all of the methods generally employed here according to the data are the tools preferred by researchers who employed quantitative research design.

Percentage of Methods/Instrument Employed

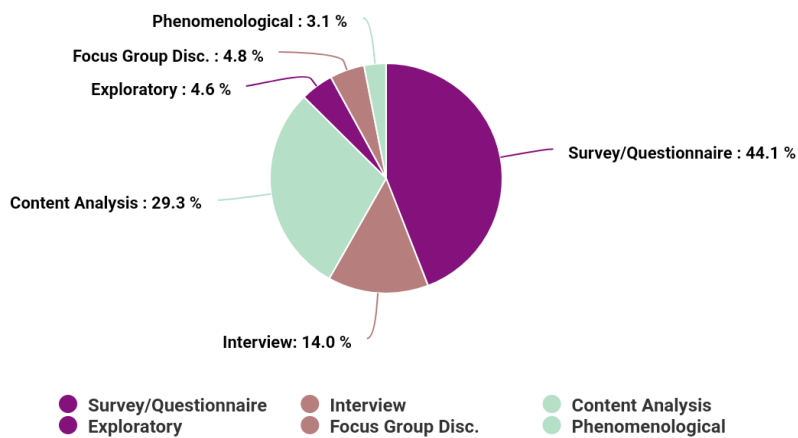


Figure ii: percentage of Methods/Instruments employed. Source: field data, February 2022

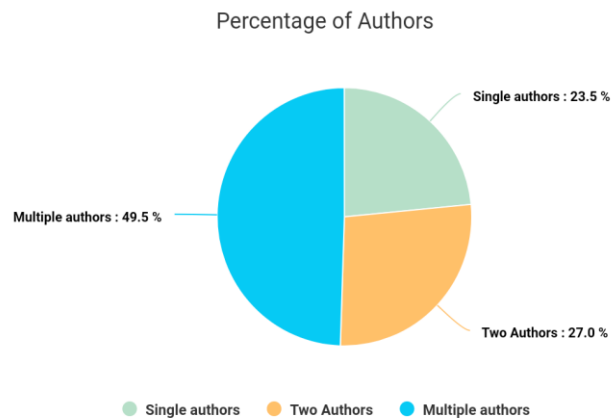
**Authors: which is better, single or multiple?**

There has been intense debate among scholars on which is preferable between research and articles of single authors and multiple authors. While some argued that the quality of a research paper has nothing to do with the number of authors, others submitted that research and reports with multiple authors are better placed to detect errors, solve problems and have quality outcomes than the latter.

A section of the debate argued that since authors are usually assessed and scored based on their position in the rundown of authors for papers they published, with ranking ranging from: senior or leading authors to co-authors, contributors and others—that single author is on better stead in this case. For instance, this assessment is used for decision-making and performance appraisal in the Nigerian Research and academic environment. The number of papers an author can cite is axiomatic to the score he would garner regarding promotion

and grants. The value of a paper, however, does not depend upon the number of authors who produce it; but is dependent on the content, new methodology, new verifiable results and the novel findings not published yet (Ramaiah, 2020).

As the debate continues, our findings (figure iii) reveal that publication in the sector still favours, to a large extent, collaboration in research activities which yields multiple authors in publication. For the period under review, articles with multiple authors is at 49.5%. The preceding is compared with reports with single authors at 23.5%—this figure is less than half of the latter. Even articles with two authors yielded 27.0%—indicating gravitation toward collaboration in research activities.



**Figure iii: percentage of authors. Source: field data, February 2022**

### Conclusion

As data has shown, a total of 392 articles were sampled in this study and were categorized as follows:

1. Articles with qualitative design - 124
2. Articles with quantitative design - 166
3. Articles with mixed-methods - 102

Nonetheless, no effort was made by the researchers to indicate the factors influencing the choices of the three research methods. There is the need to identify the key features that either encouraged or discouraged the choice of these methods as research designs.

Though quantitative research design has its origin and application in the natural sciences, social sciences, and the field of communication and media studies have constantly adopted the research design. Our findings revealed that more researchers preferred the use of quantitative research method in communication and media studies, because mass communication is a social science programme.





Whereas, the social scientific approach to research is more objective, systematic, transferable, verifiable, transparent, accessible and rigorous with predictive value.

Thus, findings have shown that besides undergraduates and graduates in communication and media studies who use this research methodology, scholars and researchers in the field are equally treading the same path. On the raging debate among scholars on account of the number of preferable authors for a scholarly paper—the data from this study indicates that scholars, especially in the field of communication and media studies, gravitate toward multiple authors publication.

### **Recommendations**

We recommend that researchers in the field of communication and media studies should explore the possibility of adopting alternative approaches that would still give the leeway to arrive at the same objective—i.e., analytical findings in the field. Researchers should pay attention to the broad knowledge and understanding of the multiple research designs, aside from the apparent quantitative design currently dominating the sector. When more research methodologies are adopted, collaborative or individual efforts will offer better process and problem-solving possibilities in the course of research, analysis and report production.

Conclusively, we recommend the choice of the Mixed-method, because of the aggregation of designs that may encourage collaboration among authors with the combination of the explanatory and predictive values in research. We equally submit that in the debate on the number of authors as it concerns scholarly articles, more research must be done to ascertain further benefits of singular and multiple authors aside from the obvious advantages from both sides currently being put forward.

### **Recommendations for Further Studies**

1. We need information on the factors influencing the choice of research methodology.
2. We need justification for the preference for multiple authors among the publications studied.

we therefore, recommend that further studies need to be conducted in this areas to shed light on them.



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Pp.3