CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN MEDIA

Communication and Information are twins. They go hand in hand. The written words are communication texts; the spoken words are verbal communication; the signs are non-verbal communication; the meetings or processions are communication events; the Internet, televisions, newspapers, magazines, radios are communication media; old phones, smart phones, iPads, kindles, emails are communication technologies; journalists, camera persons, advertisers, marketers, public relation officers are communication professionals. And what do they all provide? Information. Therefore, this age is called the Information Age or the Insta-Communication Age.

Human civilization thrives on communication which is a process of sending and receiving facts, ideas, thoughts, concepts, opinions, beliefs, attitudes, instructions, information, feelings and emotions between two or more people. A sender sends the message through a channel to its intended receiver. In this contemporary Information Age, the mass media through its various forms like the print media, electronic media, films and the new media is wholly responsible for disseminating messages in the form of information to a large number of people whose magnitude and diversity is unimaginably wide. Till the 20th century, the realm of the sender of information was safeguarded and protected but with the dawn of 21st century and the rise of 2.0 web, a new era of networked individuals surged, who are ready to transform the way a preceding communication process takes place.

Due to the advent of new technologies, the venerable profession of news dissemination that was once ‘senders’ supremacy, is finding itself at a rare moment in history, where, for the first time, his supremacy is being threatened by the audience it used to serve. Armed with easy-to-use web publishing tools, always on connections and increasingly powerful mobile devices, the ‘receiver’ has all the means to become an active participant in the creation and dissemination of news and information. Due to this widespread participation, the lines that once separated the sender and the receiver are fading away and both the entities are now one.
1.1 Historical Perspective of Participation

On November 23, 1644, eminent English poet, scholar, and polemical author John Milton brought out *Areopagitica: A speech for the Liberty of Unlicenc’d Printing, to the Parlament of England*, opposing licensing and censorship. The argument was considered history's most influential and impassioned philosophical defenses of the principle for right to freedom of speech and expression. The eloquent defenses of press freedom expressed principles banishing the licensing authority by the Parliament, as according to him, licensing is “a dishonour and derogation to the author, to the book, to the privilege and dignity of Learning.” (Milton, 1964).

For George H. Sabine (1951), the basic principle of *Areopagitica* was the “right and also the duty of every intelligent man as a rational being, to know the grounds and take responsibility for his beliefs and actions. Its corollary was a society and a state in which decisions are reached by open discussion, in which the sources of information are not contaminated by authority in the interest of party, and in which political unity is secured not by force but by a consensus that respects variety of opinion.”

Though *Areopagitica* did not persuade the Parliamentarians to invalidate the “prepublication censorship component” of the Licensing Order of 1643 initially, the concept of free will and choice of individual’s right of freedom and expression was sown in people’s mind. Milton's endeavor “laid the foundations for thought that would come after and express itself in such authors as John Locke and John Stuart Mill.” (Kendall, 1960). Milton argued “Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties.” And the freedom of the press was thus achieved in 1695. Milton (1698), in one of the quotes from *Areopagitica* says:

“*And though all the windes of doctrin were let loose to play upon the earth, so Truth be in the field, we do injuriously by licencing and prohibiting to misdoubt her strength. Let her and Falshood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the wors, in a free and open encounter*”

That was the 15th century. Today, Freedom of expression is a fundamental human right as stated in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:
“Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”

1.1.1 Estates of the Realm

After the fall of the great Western Roman Empire in the 3rd century, various geographic and ethnic kingdoms developed among the peoples of Europe, affecting their day-to-day lives. News lords and new land acquisitions were identified which were immensely influenced by the Catholic churches. During the middle ages or medieval period of 5th - 15th century, and the early modern period of 15th - 18th century, the society in Christian Europe was divided into three major classifications or estates: the clergy, the nobility, and the commoners, as, in the 11th and 12th centuries, thinkers argued that human society consisted of three orders: those who fight, those who pray, and those who labour. This kind of system, formed the “government of the ancient Hebrews and the Christian Biblical basis, the later Roman Empire, and also the peoples who succeeded Rome after the 4th century.” (Herrin, 2015).

Dictionary defines the word ‘estates’ as “a class or order regarded as forming part of the body politic, in particular (in Britain), one of great classes constituting Parliament, now the Lords spiritual (the heads of the Church), the Lords temporal (the peerage), and the Commons, formerly vested with distinct political powers.” These nobility, clergy and commoners were often referred to as the First, Second, and Third Estates respectively by medieval ranking of their importance in the society. But during the 18th century, the status quo changed as the French Revolution (1789 - 1799) abolished this monarchy system and established a secular and more democratic republic.

We have come a long way since then. In the 20th century, where, society is far more egalitarian, for any republican government system to work efficiently, maintain decorum and status quo in the country, four administrative bodies are established: 1- Parliament, 2- Administrative department, 3- Judiciary body, 4- Press. These four stand together as pillars to strengthen our democracy and in the absence of any of these four estates, the government will not be able to perform systematically and proficiently. The working of four estates in our country are discussed below:
1.1.2 Four Estates of Democracy

Out of various forms of government in a country, a democratically elected government is considered to be the best, as this government is- ‘by the people, of the people and for the people’. Monarchies and dictatorships, all over the world, have been giving way to democracy, slowly but surely. This process got accelerated during the last century where large populations were liberated in Asia, Africa, Europe and South America and are now enjoying fruits of democracy.

A democratic society is generally governed through a very methodically prepared document called Constitution. It encompasses various complex aspects of governance in a country. India is a very large and heterogeneous country with many religions, castes, languages, with different dialects and diverse social customs. We have a beautifully drafted and flexible Constitution which came into force on 26th January, 1950 and has stood with us in good stead thus far. The Constitution mandates functioning of the government through its three branches also known as three Estates or pillars of democracy. Besides this, there is another Estate, the ‘Fourth Estate’ which immensely cultivates to effective functioning of the first three. These four Estates are:

i) Legislature
ii) Executive
iii) Judiciary
iv) Press (Print and Electronic media)

First Estate: Legislature

The first Estate of democracy is the Legislature whose essential function is to make laws that will contribute to the welfare of people. It consists of parliament in the Union government and Legislative Assemblies in the State governments. The parliament has two houses viz. Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha also known as the upper house and the lower house respectively. Membership of the Rajya Sabha cannot exceed 250 (its present strength is 245). All the members are elected by legislators of the State Assemblies and Union Territories except 12 who are nominated by the President of India for their distinguished contributions in various streams of public life like art, culture, sports, literature, social services etc. The Rajya Sabha members
have tenure of six years and 1/3rd of the strength gets elected/nominated every two years. The Rajya Sabha is a permanent body that cannot be dissolved.

Members of the Lok Sabha are directly elected by people of India. Present strength of Lok Sabha is 543. The President can nominate two members of Anglo-Indian community if in his opinion, the community is not adequately represented. Besides this, 131 seats are reserved for Scheduled Castes (84) and Scheduled Tribes (47). Lok Sabha has a tenure of 5 years and unlike Rajya Sabha, it can be dissolved before completion of its full term.

A Bill can be introduced in any of the two houses of parliament. It becomes a law only after the President accords his assent to the Bill passed by both houses of parliament. If a bill is rejected by one of the two houses, the government can call a joint session of the two houses to get the bill passed. However, a Constitution Amendment Bill is required to be passed by simple majority of both houses and with at least two third majority of the members present and voting.

Of the two houses, Lok Sabha is considered to be more powerful as a Money Bill and Motion of no confidence can be introduced in this house only. The expenditure for administration is also sanctioned by Lok Sabha.

**Second Estate: Executive**

The second Estate of democracy is the Executive, a branch that ensures effective administration of day to day affairs of the government. The power for this purpose is vested in the President and he exercises this power through a Council of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister who enjoys support of majority members of the Lok Sabha. The Prime Minister is more powerful than the President as the latter acts as per the advice tendered by the former and his/her cabinet.

The Prime Minister selects his Council of Ministers who are assigned charge of various departments like Home, Finance, Defense, Foreign Affairs, Industries, Rural Development etc. Besides cabinet ministers, junior ministers (Minister of State) can also be appointed to assist their senior colleagues in a ministry or assigned independent charge of a ministry. Policy guidelines are laid down by Council of Ministers and the policies are carried out by the civil servants who also execute laws made by the Legislature.
The ministers are accountable to the parliament and have to explain or answer any question/s pertaining to their departments, put to them by the members. It will not be out of place to mention here that the Executive is the most important Estate of the government and enjoys pre-eminence among the three Estates. During recess of parliament, the President can promulgate an Ordinance which has the same force as a law passed by the Legislature. It also undertakes judicial function e.g. the President can commute or remit a sentence awarded to any one by a court of law.

Third Estate: Judiciary

The third Estate of democracy is Judiciary, whose primary function is the administration of justice according to the law of the land. It generally does not make or enforce law but it interprets law. The administration of justice is carried out through lower courts at Tehsil/District level, High Courts at State level and Supreme Court at the national level. The Supreme Court is the highest appellate court of the country. Besides interpretation of law, courts perform following important functions:

1. The Supreme Court and High Courts protect fundamental rights of individuals. It is ensured that these rights are not violated under any circumstances.

2. If there is any conflict in any two laws, Supreme Court settles and decides which law will prevail.

3. Many a time, Supreme Court/High Courts interpret the law in a way that it becomes a new law.

4. Supreme Court/High Courts also entertain Public Interest Litigation (PIL) petitions on matters of great public importance. These petitions, more often than not, generate new laws for public welfare.

The appointment of judges of Supreme Courts/High Courts was earlier done through Collegium System. However, National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) is to be formed now, after passing of 99th amendment to the Constitution in August, 2014 and assented to by the President in December, 2014. The NJAC Act has come into force on April 13, 2015. The Commission will consist of Chief Justice of India, two senior judges of Supreme Court, Union Minister of Law and two eminent
persons of impeccable integrity to be nominated by a committee having the Prime Minister, the Chief Justice of India and Leader of opposition as its members. This Act has, however, is under consideration in the Supreme Court.

**Fourth Estate: Press (Print and Electronic Media)**

Media or Press, plays a very crucial role in the effective functioning of any democracy and is truly its Fourth Estate, a name coined by Edmund Burke in 1787 and popularised by Thomas Carlyle, an 18th century author. In his book, ‘*On Heroes and Hero Worship*’ (1841) Thomas Carlyle talks about the event on May 1787, when Louis XVI summoned a full meeting of the ‘Estates General’ to Versailles. “The First Estate consisted of three hundred clergy. The Second Estate, three hundred nobles and the Third Estate had six hundred commoners.” Carlyle says that after few years of the French revolution, “Burke used it for the first time in a speech in the British House of Commons in 1787. Burke’s speech marks a very important occasion, that of opening parliamentary proceedings to the press.” Carlyle describes the position taken by Burke while pointing towards the press gallery he remarked, “There are three Estates in Parliament, but in the Reporters’ Gallery yonder sits a Fourth Estate more important far than they all.” *(Carlyle, 1841; Splichal, 2002).*

Thomas Carlyle (1841), pointed out that the press had a powerful role in parliamentary procedure, shaping the will of the people and influencing the outcome of votes among the government. However, some historians are of the view that other than Edmund Burke (who according to them spoke those words casually), it was Henry Brougham while speaking in Parliament in 1823, and Lord Thomas Macaulay (an eminent historian and Member of Parliament in England during 19th century) while reviewing Hallam's Constitutional History in 1828, coined the term ‘Fourth Estate’. Lord Macaulay while reviewing noted, “The gallery in which the reporters sit has become a fourth Estate.” In a book entitled ‘*French Revolution*’ in 1837, Carlyle declares, “A Fourth Estate, of Able Editors, springs up; increases and multiplies, irrepressible, incalculable.”

The Press or Media, does not have any constitutional or statutory powers attached to them but it holds an important position in the upliftment of our democracy. The importance of this role in our country can be ascertained from the fact that All India Radio and television now cover about 90% and 80% of our population respectively. There are about 60 news channels running 24x7 and about
160 major newspapers/magazines in different languages which contribute substantially to shaping of public opinion in our society. According to FICCI report (2014), Television is at 417.2 INR (in billion) with 12.7% growth, Newspapers at 243.1 (in billion) with 8.5% growth and Radio is at 14.6 (in billion) with 15% growth.

Total Internet user base in India grew to approximately 214 million by end of 2013, with almost 130 million going online using mobile devices. Mobile Internet users dominated the total internet user base capturing an overall share of 61%. The phased progress in digitization has been a stepping stone for the industries success. By the end of 2014, smart phone adoption is expected to reach 1.7 billion users. India would become the third largest smart phone market in the world. Innovative strategies to monetize digital content, rapid growth of new media are being counted as some of key levers of growth for the Indian media and entertainment industry. (FICCI, 2014).

The three other Estates viz. Legislature, Executive and Judiciary are mandated to function in a manner that will enhance public welfare and the media act like watchdogs of society by keeping their ‘hawk eyes’ on their functioning. Each and every act of the government is reported, dissected and discussed threadbare with experts so as to appraise the viewers with various aspects of any given act. This public opinion shaped by the Media, deters the authorities from indulging in any malpractices. It is pertinent to point out here that the media have played a very important role in unearthing of various scams during the last few years. Many famous crime cases have been solved due to intense pressure built by the media. They also play a crucial role in protection of human rights. It is, therefore, important to emphasize that the independence of media in a democratic society remains sacrosanct.

It cannot be denied that media have a huge responsibility towards public at large and cannot absolve itself of any misdemeanor. In the recent years mass media as an industry has seen a remarkable growth making it a transnational industry. Large conglomerates own media units that control the flow of news and entertainment to all parts of the world. In such a scenario, it is possible, that the news flow may sometimes get polarised or fall in favour or out of favour of some countries and sections of population. Since the phenomenon is likely to grow bigger in terms of length, breadth and depth, it is pertinent to observe the ramifications of industrial growth on its ultimate product i.e. news. Therefore to give shoulder to the pillars of
our democracy, which is fighting the threats posed by the consequences of global, capitalistic, competitive environment leading to vices such as corruption, crime, nepotism, population, caste, communalism and so on.

Taking a cue from the environment thus created, the stake holder who bore the brunt of the market forces and struggled to survive as a voiceless entity at the far end of the communication process model started to contribute in the global dialogue. He, the receiver of information onslaught, misinformation, information overload, rumour, gossip, innuendo, and all types of communication, found himself turning into a crucial unit of the communication model. The globalised world with its media behemoths had also brought about a remarkable change in the ubiquity and all pervasive presence of media. The technological changes provided each individual with the paraphernalia for global communication. The voiceless, not only found the voice but also the means to make their voices heard. Thus comes into the picture, an emerging ‘Fifth Estate’ known as ‘Citizen Journalism’ a phenomenon that is rising in response to the market monopoly of media conglomerisation. This is improving public participation in all areas of opinion generation creating a more thriving democracy.

1.2 Public Participation in World Context

Nicholas Negroponte (1995) predicted that in the future, online news would give readers the ability to choose only the topics and sources that interested them. But why only cyber? All the media that we have in today’s time, ply on the same phenomenon. “The present generation of young people, unlike its predecessors, lives in an increasingly globalizing world that is being transformed by a wide range of technological innovations” (Asthana, 2006). Today, young people are involving in the media as active participants, rather than passive consumers.

Taking radio as an example, and considering the various ways of participation on radio such as: sms, phone-in, voxpops, letters, contests, competitions, participatory talks, panel discussions etc., these are few ways through which a citizen can participate in media. In print, media, letters to the editor, readers opinion, readers column, voxpops/symposium, features, reviews, oped page etc. are meant for participation of the public. In television, one can send their videos, votings, sms for participating on this medium. Internet, is the meeting ground of all media providing the written word, the audio and the video element, the communication methods ranging from intra personal to mass. Posting a comment online, writing a
story/opinion piece, sending a picture or a video, sharing personal experience in a form of an article, starting or participating in any online movement, answering any web poll, participating in an online chat, contributing to Wikipedia, writing a blog, grading/ranking any place, event, restaurant etc., tweeting, sharing any video on any website like YouTube, to name a few ways of online participation.

This is the world of Participatory Journalism, where “You can make your own news. We all can. So let’s get started,” says Dan Gillmor (2006), who believed that the new grassroots media is in the cyber journalism. The vision that seemed cutting edge and worrisome few years ago, now seems to have come partly true. Professional Journalism giants The Wall Street Journal, MSNBC.com, The Washington Post and CNN, to name a few, all offer readers some degree of personalization on the front pages of their sites.

From the past two centuries, an independent press has served as an advocate for society and played an essential role during the era of democratic enlightenment. It feels like a new era has been thrust upon – an era of enlightened anxiety. “Participatory journalism is all journalistic content created collaboratively by journalists, independent media, and citizens, as well as content created ‘independently’ by citizen or independent media that is then acquired or used by mainstream media” (Neheli, 2011), the intent of which is to provide independent, reliable, accurate, wide-ranging and relevant information that a democracy requires.

1.2.1 Historical evidence of Participation:

Participatory journalism is not an old phenomenon. Since the time the concept of finding and distributing news came into being, in some way or the other, the existence of participatory journalism was clearly evident. Post-boy (escenglish, 2011), a thrice-a-week London news-sheet in the 16th century published by Abel Roper and edited by Abel Boyer, left its last page ‘blank’ in order to have the comments, reviews and suggestions from the public. This 4-paged news sheet was kept in the coffee houses for the locals to come and write any piece of information that they wanted to share or discuss with the rest. This type of writing and getting the feedback from the readers is a well based example of participatory journalism well prevalent even during the 16th century.
Many corantos or early newspapers in Britain emphasized on the concept of feedback in the 16th and 17th century. The importance of the participation via readers/consumers was clearly judged by the news moguls of that time. Corantos (sometimes also known as news-book, pamphlet, and broadsheet) comes from the word ‘current’, which were “early informational broadsheets, precursors to newspapers.” In the beginning of the 14th century, a system where letters of news and discussion would be sent to a central collecting point to be bundled and sent around to the various correspondents, was developed. The German Fugger family who were well known and prominent European bankers during the 15th and the 16th century, had organized a system of collecting the letters that were viewed and read by the people. This arrangement of news and discussion dissemination lasted till the 18th century, along with the arrival of full-fledged newspapers in the 17th century.

Every medium throughout history and the process of evolution has provided a mechanism for public participation. It dependent on many factors such as ownership, periodicity, feasibility, affordability, connectivity, education levels, societal diktats, needs and law.
The new tydings out of Italy are not yet com.

Out of Weemen, the 6 November.

The French Ambassadour hath caused the Earle of Dampier to be buried flatly at Presburg. In the mean while hath Bethlem Gabur cied all the Hungarish States, to com together at Presburg the 5. of this present, to discus about the Crowning & other causes concerning the same Kingdom.

The Hungarians continue with roving again against the Landes. In the manner lyeth yet near unto ours by Rackonitz, though the greech that the eminie caud all his might to com together, to com this vyve against Prage, if that come to pallace, it shall run of with out blaves, the which might be revealed within few days.

It continueth, that in the Sater Craz are gathered together 10000 Coutrye men, mult hundred men, against Meulen, & no Bohemians, they will help the King, to drive the eminie out of the land. In like manner, from certaine 1000 Coutrye men rebel in the Lemmartichus, but it is feared that those Coutrye men are flared up, through practice of the Adversarie, that the eminie in the mean time while might com to Prage. We under stand, that the Empeur hath not been in the Camp, but by the Duke of Saxon from certain days, therefore we are to looke to our selves, for fear of Treacherie. And it is thought that the Empeur will leave Austria to the Hungarians, & doe to effect his intention only upon Prage.

Writing from Marburg in Hellen, that the Earle of the same Land, took the foreord Cirrie to be strongly forriied, there on dog work many 100 men daily, and there is mutter in the Earle hip Zigenheim not long since, Government of foot men, &s to Coutrye men, the foot men are to Marburg & Rijn. But the foot men are lodget in the Villages about the Cirrie, & thereafter are also mutter in the Duke of Saxon Launus burg; Government in Trier-Zigenheim, now further where they shall be laid & used, is yet unknown. The fames Brothers Government, there quarter is laid by Ceild, the Souliers which are taken on about Hamburg, Lubeck, in the Duke hip of Holletum, & Meckenburg. Should also be matter about Cael & be used where need & shall require.

Since the last we cannot enquire, that there is any thing of any importance past betwixt the Marquis Spinola & the United Princess. We understand that the foreorded Spinola will by his Souliers in Garnillow with the foot, & soke them into divers places, on part to Oppenheim, Alzey, Ingelheim & Crastilach, the other part to Summenhof & Barchacrah, the speache goeth that there shall be laid with in Mants a good Company in Garnillow.

The Bishop at Halberstadt, Duke Christian at Brunsivick, both came to take upon 2000 Musketeers, to send to the United Princess.

Here is rydings, that between the King of Bohemia & the Empeurs folk have been a great Battlle about Prage, but because there is the differnt writing & speaking thereupon, so cannot for this time any certainty thereof be written, but must vayse for the next Pol. As also of the Cirrie Pile, which the Earle of Mansfield (to the speache goeth) should have delivered into the Empeurs hands.

From Cadon in Bohemia, 4 mile from Rastun, the 12 November.

From Soltz is certaine advis that the Empeurs folk have made them selves with all there might out of their Camp, & taken thei vay to wards Prage, like as they weare then come to the long mile, but as the King under stand, he is broken up with his armie, & come to the log mile before the eminie, where they have had a very strong Battell & on both sides more then 10000 men, though most on the Kings side, also hath the eminie gotten of the King some pieces of Ordinance and vajenets with amunition, to that the King must retire back to Prage, & the eminie to the Weislieberg, there he lies yet and roves from hence to the Leut Marifleit Cirrie unto Bris.

Fig: 1.2 Copy of a Coranto

Source: Coranto (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coranto)
1.2.2 Participation in the Modern World:

Participatory Journalism is where the “audience plays an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analyzing and disseminating content” (Willis and Bowman 2003). John Seely Brown chief scientist of Xerox Corp., elaborates on participatory journalism in the book The Elements of Journalism: “In an era when anyone can be a reporter or commentator on the Web, ‘you move to a two-way journalism.’ The journalist becomes a ‘forum leader’, or a mediator rather than simply a teacher or lecturer. The audience becomes not consumers, but ‘pro-sumers’, a hybrid of consumer and producer.” In the last few years, with the advent of new technological devices, a new generation of Internet users has come forth to become content-creators, who were once content-readers.

“The medium is the message” (McLuhan, 1964). This term coined by communications theorist Marshal McLuhan almost half a century ago has never seemed more relevant than today. “In the past twenty years, the digital revolution has given us new ways to access written and audio visual material via the web. With the rise of the Internet, medium is increasingly influential on the content being produced and the message being conveyed to audiences” (Fowler, 2012). Social networks have transformed human access capabilities much like modern transportation and the telephone did over 150 years ago (Lichtenberg, 2010). Henry Jenkins while discussing McLuhan’s concept, said the growing culture of participatory potential of media has become “even more acute as the borders between audiences and media producers are blurring.”

Fowler (2012), in an article “The medium is the message: How McLuhan’s theory remains relevant to the citizen journalist” talks about the significance of the Internet, that encourages an interactivity with alternative media i.e. television, newspaper and radio. The writer says, “Other mediums such as television only allow us to receive messages as a linear experience. Furthermore, it is a linear experience that only allows for one way communication which leaves audiences with no opportunity to respond. Move the same content over to a website and the experience changes dramatically.” Communication’s theorist Roger Logan explains “In the
context of a website, information is rarely passed to the user as a linear experience. Instead information might all be split up into different pages or sections. It is up to the user to decide how to consume the information and reach a conclusion” (Logan 2010).

Media participatory share three interrelated characteristics:

- “Many-to-many media: this feature has made it possible for every person connected to the network to broadcast and receive text, images, audio, video, software, data, discussions, transactions, computations, tags or links to and from every other person. The asymmetry between broadcaster and audience that was dictated by the structure of pre-digital technologies dictated has changed radically. This is a technical-structural characteristic.

- Social media: Participatory media are social media whose value and power derives from the active participation of many people. This is a psychological and social characteristic.

- Social networks: when amplified by information and communication networks, social networks enable broader, faster, and lower cost coordination of activities. This is an economic and political characteristic.” (Rheingold, 2007).

Jenkins, Purushotma, Clinton, Weigel and Robison in their paper “Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century” (2005), describes a participatory culture as one:

- “With relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement

- With strong support for creating and sharing one’s creations with others

- With some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices

- Where members believe that their contributions matter

- Where members feel some degree of social connection with one another (at the least they care what other people think about what they have created).”
The World Wide Web has evolved from a read-only to read-write medium. Scholars believe the boundaries circumferencing the audiences and their creators is becoming blurred and invisible. One-to-many “lectures” are now transformed into “conversations”. (Gillmor, 2014 & Kluth, 2006). Shayne Bowman and Chris Willis (2003), in their paper, suggest the “audience” should be renamed “participants”. For the first time, people at the edges of the network have the ability to create their own news entities,” says Dan Gillmor, a San Jose Mercury News journalist.

In 1963, shocking Kennedy’s death came for most people via television. September 11, 2001, followed a similar grim pattern. “But this time, something else, something profound, was happening: the news was being produced by regular people who had something to say and show, and not solely by the official news organizations that had traditionally decided how the first draft of history would look” (Gillmor, 2004). It was possible—it was inevitable—because of new publishing tools available on the Internet. People’s participation was evolving.

One of the first projects to encompass Participatory Journalism in the 21st century, was the September 11 Photo Project. It was a not-for-profit community based photo project in response to the attack and its aftermath. It was founded in the days following the tragedy, which provided a venue “for the display of photographs accompanied by captions by anyone who wished to participate.” According to California State Senate the project “collected photographs from more than 700 amateur and professional photographers, and had over 300,000 visitors over its run.”

In “What is Participatory Journalism?” J. D. Lasica (2003), classifies media for Citizen Journalism into the following types:

- “Audience participation (such as user comments attached to news stories, personal blogs, photos or video footage captured from personal mobile cameras, or local news written by residents of a community).
- Independent news and information websites (Consumer Reports, the Drug Report).
- Full-fledged participatory news sites (NowPublic, OhmyNews, DigitalJournal.com, GroundReport.)
• Collaborative and contributory media sites (Slashdot, Kuro5hin, Newsvine).
• Other kids of thin media (mailing lists, email newsletters).
• Personal broadcasting sites (video broadcast sites such as KenRadio).”

New media theorist Terry Flew (2002), states that there are three elements “critical to the rise of citizen journalism and citizen media:

• Open publishing
• Collaborative editing
• Distributed content

Mary Lou Fulton, publisher of the Northwest Voice in Bakersfield, California, says “We are the traditional journalism model turned upside down. Instead of being the gatekeeper, telling people that what’s important to them isn’t news. We are just opening up the gates and letting people come on in. we are a better community newspaper for having thousands of readers who serve as the eyes and ears for the Voice, rather than having everything filtered through the views of a small group of reporters and editors.” (Glaser, 2004).

Today, “car companies are running open design contests. Reuters is carrying blog postings alongside its regular news feed. Microsoft is working overtime to fend off user-created Linux. We’re looking at an explosion of productivity and innovation, and it's just getting started, as millions of minds that would otherwise have drowned in obscurity get backhauled into the global intellectual economy.” (Grossman, 2006a). Even the TIME magazine had its cover page dedicated to this emerging phenomenon of participation, which says “TIME PERSON OF THE YEAR: Yes, You. You control the Information Age. Welcome to your world.” (Fig. 1.3).
Fig: 1.3 TIME Magazine Cover Page: YOU
Photo illustration by Arthur Hochstein, Photographed by Spencer Jones
Issue: December 25, 2006 / January 1, 2007
Volume 168, No. 26
1.3 Public Participation in Indian Context

In the book titled “Encyclopedia of Journalism”, author and editor Christopher H. Sterling talks about Joseph Pulitzer’s understanding of the role of journalism. Pulitzer wrote about the act as a privilege: “The privilege of molding opinion, touching the hearts and appealing to the reason of hundreds of thousands every day. Here is the most fascinating of all professions. Every single day opens new doors for the journalist who holds the confidence of the community and has the capacity to address it” (Sterling, 2009, p1779).

In the current scenario of an increasingly digitalized world, the convergence from tradition media to the new media “seems to be the future of journalism. What greater example of this is there than when BBC turned to citizens to bring the news to the nation after the London terrorist attacks. Within 6 hours the BBC received more than 1,000 photographs, 20 pieces of amateur video, 4,000 text messages, and 20,000 e-mails. People were participating in new coverage in a way we had never seen and this became an integral part of how the BBC reported the day’s events” (Sambrook, 2009).

Even in India, the roots of participatory journalism are quite evident. During the freedom struggles in the 19th and 20th century, when India was under the rule of British raj, the publication of news content in the then-newspapers fell under their realm. Many societies and Government included, wished there were no newspapers at all, or if were there, the news were of the British, by the British and for the British. People of India wanted a voice and “the educated Indians did not take much time to recognize the power of this seemingly small sheet of paper” (Singh, 2011). It was the idea of this participatory journalism that the underground press came into being and demonstrated the role of the participant journalist, throughout the freedom struggle which lead to a major change in the history of our country.

Citizen Journalists are not just consumers, but also co-producers of journalism who during the freedom struggle rebelled against the British rule and created huge public opinions. “The story of our freedom struggle is incomplete without a mention of the newspapers either published or patronised by the most prominent freedom fighters, Ram Mohan Roy with Sambad Kaumudi, Bal Gangadhar Tilak with Mahratta, Gandhi with his Young India and Harijan, Motilal Nehru with
Independent, Jawaharlal Nehru with National Herald and Dyal Singh Majithia with The Tribune.” (Singh, 2011).

Today, the role of journalists and citizens have increasingly become important, as from lectures they have transformed into conversations. The ability for anyone to publish news, facts, opinions and information seem to make both professional and amateur journalists more relevant. “Professional journalists can critique Internet sources and help audiences to verify what information is reliable and what is not. In this way it is helping arm the public with the tools it needs to perform this more active form of citizenship” (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2001).

Given the bustle in today’s fast paced life, it has been noted that professional journalists is increasingly sharing “their control over the news production process with their users, who are becoming more and more actively involved in the creation of content.” (Paulussen, Heinonen, Domingo & Quandt, 2007). This is resulting in an increased use of user-generated-content in mainstream media by amateur reporters, simulating long term collaborations between both the entities i.e. professional as well as non-professional journalism, which is healthy diet for a healthy democracy.

Few examples of Indian mainstream media calling out for Citizen Journalists in their advertisement saying “You See It, You Report It” (Fig. 1.4) or by showing simple steps for “How to Become a Mobile Citizen Journalist” (Fig. 1.5) are given below:

Fig. 1.4 You See It, You Report It: Be a Citizen Journalist
Fig. 1.5 Three steps showing ‘How to Become a Mobile Citizen Journalist’ at IBNLive

Source: http://cj.ibnlive.in.com/mobile-cj/
1.4 The phenomenon of Citizen Journalism and Emergence of Fifth Estate

On July 4, 1969, Sherry R. Arnstein wrote a paper entitled “A ladder of citizen participation” that gave us rungs or steps in a ladder of citizen participation (Fig. 1.6) and showed eight steps, each representing a different level of citizen participation.

The bottom rungs (1 and 2) describe levels of “non-participation”, whose real objective is not to enable people to participate in planning or conducting programs, but to enable power-holders to “educate” or “cure” the participants. The middle rungs (3, 4 and 5) progress to levels of “tokenism” that allow the citizens to hear and to have a voice. But under certain conditions they lack the power to insure their views will be heeded by the powerful. When participation is restricted to these levels, there is no follow-through, no “muscle,” hence no assurance of changing the status quo. The top rungs (6, 7 and 8) are levels of citizen power with increasing degrees of decision-making clout. The higher end of the ladder, participation is about citizens having more power to negotiate and change the status quo. Their voices are heard and are responded to. (Arnstein, 1969).

![Fig: 1.6 Eight Rungs on a Ladder of Citizen Participation](https://www.planning.org/pas/memo/2007/mar/pdf/JAPA35No4.pdf)
We, definitely feature in the top rung given the advent of latest technologies and the 2.0 web. With today’s galore of new communication tools, the citizen journalist movement has found a new life as the average person can now capture news and distribute it globally. As Yochai Benkler (2006), has noted, “the capacity to make meaning – to encode and decode humanly meaningful statements – and the capacity to communicate one’s meaning around the world, or readily available to, at least many hundreds of millions of users around the globe.”

The phenomenon of Citizen Journalism is the power “that will not only change the world, but also change the way the world changes.” Silicon Valley consultants gave the Internet a new name Web 2.0, like it were a new version of an old software, which actually and really is a revolution in every sense. “If Web 1.0 was organized around pages, Web 2.0 is organized around people.” (Johnson, 2006). “Web 2.0 is made up of ordinary people: hobbyists, diarists, armchair pundits, people adding their voice to the Web's great evolving conversation for the sheer love of it, called amateurs.” (ibid).

Definitions of Citizen Journalism:

Citizen Journalism is also known as “public”, “participatory”, “democratic”, “guerrilla” or “street journalism” (Baase, 2008; Case, 2007 & Tamara, 2007).

“When any common man in his capacity as a citizen of a nation takes up the initiative to report things or express his views about happenings around him then the occurrence is popularly termed as citizen journalism.”

“The act of a citizen, or group of citizens, participating and playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analysing and disseminating news and information can be termed as Participatory Journalism.” (Bowman & Willis, 2003).

According to Jay Rosen (2006), citizen journalists are “the people formerly known as the audience”, who “were on the receiving end of a media system that ran one way, in a broadcasting pattern, with high entry fees and a few firms competing to speak very loudly while the rest of the population listened in isolation from one another, and who today are not in a situation like that at all. … the people formerly known as the audience are simply the public made realer, less fictional, more able and less predictable.”
In South Korea, Citizen Journalism website OhmyNews, founded by Oh Yeon-ho on February 22, 2000 with a motto “Every Citizen is a Reporter” became popular and commercially successful. Till 2011, it had “a staff of some 40-plus traditional reporters and editors who write about 20% of its content, with the rest coming from other freelance contributors who are mostly ordinary citizens.” Today, OhmyNews has an estimated 50,000 contributors, and “has been credited with transforming South Korea’s conservative political environment.” (Roebuck, 2011).

In 2011, ThemeParkInsider.com became the first online publication “to win a major journalism award for a feature that was reported and written entirely by readers, earning an Online Journalism Award from the Online News Association and Columbia Graduate School of Journalism for its Accident Watch section, where readers tracked injury accidents at theme parks and shared accident prevention tips.” (ibid).

During the 2004 U.S. presidential election, both the Democratic and Republican parties “issued press credentials to citizen bloggers covering the convention, making a new level of influence and credibility for non-traditional journalists. Some bloggers also began watchdogging the work of conventional journalists, monitoring their work for biases and inaccuracy.” (ibid).

Also, weblogs or “blogs has given people a voice and therefore power” (Gillmor, 2004). “The people’s participation itself and what they produce are regarded with the hope to contribute to an informed citizenry” (Bowman and Willis, 2003; Gillmor, 2004) and democracy (Bowman and Willis, 2003). “A recent trend in Citizen Journalism has been the emergence of what blogger Jeff Jarvis terms hyperlocal journalism, as online news sites invite contribution from local residents of their subscription areas, who often report on topics that conventional newspapers.” (Walker, 2004).

The expansion of the World Wide Web has led to a vast amount of user-generated contents being created in various forms such as blogs, podcasts, wikis, twitters, etc. In the year 2007, Prof William H. Dutton wrote a paper titled, “Through the Network of Networks - The Fifth Estate”. In this paper, he talks about “the rise of the press, radio, television and other mass media that has created an independent institution: the ‘Fourth Estate’, central to pluralist democratic processes. However, the
growing use of the Internet and related technologies enables the networking of individuals in ways that create a new source of accountability not only in government and politics, but also in other sectors.” In the 21st Century, “a new institution is emerging with some characteristics similar to the Fourth Estate, but with sufficiently distinctive and important features to warrant its recognition as a new Fifth Estate” (Dutton, 2007), a term first coined by Stephen D. Cooper (2006).

Media plays a crucial role in shaping a healthy democracy. It is “the backbone of a democracy. Media makes us aware of various social, political and economic activities happening around the world. It is like a mirror, which shows us or strives to show us the bare truth and harsh realities of life. In the age of information technology we are bombarded with information. We get the pulse of the world events with just a click of a mouse. The flow of information has increased manifolds. Thanks to technology that has brought a kind of revolution in journalism. In the scenario of unrestricted sharing of news and information in the vast expanse of space could contribute to the cacophony of misinformation floating through cyber space.” (Bhattacharyya, 2011). This may sometimes by provoked by emotion, systematically planned by vested interest, used for commercial gains by business entities, misused through naïve, unintentional actions by novices and many others. However, it does not take away the new found power of the media in the hands of the common man.

This body is considered more important these days, it “plays an important role as an informative bridge between governing bodies and general public, in absence of media general public cannot know about what kind of bills and acts are passed in the parliament, and what are their positive and negative effects in the society. If media person close their eyes the government officials will do what they want, so media plays a very important and impartial role between government activities and general public, so much so that it is said that the freedom of media is the guarantee of success of republic government.” (Sankhla, 2011).

1.4.1 An episode of Citizen Journalism: An experience, with Mr. Ram Mohan

While having a conversation regarding the present research study with Mr. Ram Mohan, Senior Executive, Global Accounts Management at CIENA, London, he narrated his personal experience whilst in Gujarat in 1992. Here is what he has to say:
“During the 1992 riots in Gujrat when the routine life was disrupted and the common man was trying to come to terms with the life changing situation around him, he found dearth of local information and news.

Every situation provides its own solutions and this time the solutions came in the form of the satellite cable operators. The advent of satellite television in 1991, gave birth to local TV operators who established facilities to receive, decode transmission from satellite TV and distribute the same locally. TV operators realizing the power of their facilities, encouraged local citizens to video shoot about incidents in their neighbourhoods and had them fed via their facilities to their customers. This provided real time updates in local areas to the residents in these communities, which in turn was relayed by word of mouth and phone to those near and far (including policemen).

When the common man witnessed a new phenomenon for the first time in his life. The power of owning the media and controlling the content which opened new opportunities for nascent citizen force media.”

1.4.2 Prominent Examples of Citizen Journalism:

Citizen Journalists are not bound by the conventional term of a journalist. They are amateurs with passion. The word *amateur* comes from the Latin *amo*, which means “love.” Amateur journalists do this kind of reporting for the love of journalism (Taylor 2010). Of the million examples of a common man’s or an amateur’s recordings hitting the Internet and the mainstream media, here are few prominent citizen journalism acts that brought the phenomenon to the forefront of the public domain.

![Fig. 1.7 See. Click. Share.](image)
Examples of Citizen Journalism in the World:

- Abraham Zapruder, who filmed the assassination of President John F. Kennedy with a home-movie camera, is called the ancestor of all citizen journalists. (Costemalle, 2007).

- During 9/11 in 2001, many eye witness accounts of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, came from citizen journalists. Images and stories from citizen journalists close to the WTC offered content that played a major role in the story.

- In 2004, when the 9.1 magnitude underwater earthquake caused a huge tsunami in Banda Acch Indonesia, news footage from many people who experienced the tsunami was widely broadcast.

- London bombing attacks in 2005 had news images and information by the accidental journalism, i.e. amateur reporters.

- Famous examples include Saffron revolution in Myanmar, Orange revolution in Ukraine, overthrow of Philippine President Joseph Estrada, Egypt Revolution, which was a part of Arabian Spring that reflected how citizen fought for democracy and freedom in the Arab world, Occupy Wall Street Movement in USA to curb social and economic inequality worldwide.

- Citizen journalists shot video of Hurricane Ike as it moved through the Caribbean, Texas, and the midsection of the United States in September, 2008

- On 1 January 2009, Oscar Grant was shot and killed in a subway station by Bay Area Rail Transit officers. This event was recorded by several passengers on their cell phones and later uploaded to the video-sharing website YouTube. The videos generated significant protests among online and offline communities, and were eventually used as evidence in the ensuing trial.

- During the 2009 Iranian election protests, the microblog service Twitter played an important role, after foreign journalists had effectively been barred from reporting.
WikiLeaks shook the world with its leaked secret information and significant documents from between 2006-13, was started by Julian Assange, an Australian Internet activist.

There are even two movies named “The Fifth Estate” and “We Steal Secrets” released both in 2013, on the Julian Assange episode.

Osama bin Laden’s raid and death, one of the biggest news stories of 2011, was reported unwittingly in tweets by a local IT consultant one day before Barack Obama announced it to the world.


Whitney Houston’s death in 2012, which was reported on Twitter over an hour before any mainstream press picked up on it.

Chinese students attacked on Sydney train in July, 2012

The live chase for the men guilty of the Boston Marathon bombings in April 2013 saw news channels relying heavily upon the updates of citizens living in the area to establish what was happening. This was captured through videos, pictures, tweets, skype calls, blogs and many more mediums.

Edward Joseph Snowden, an American computer professional, leaked classified information from the National Security Agency in USA to the mainstream media, starting in June 2013 that took the American government by storm.

Fergusson killing of Michael Brown and New York killing of Eric Garner in 2014, both by police officers were recorded on cell phone cameras by passer-by.

Citizen journalists have reported conflict zones in Syria in 2014 and started an online crisis mapping system “Syria Tracker”.

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Examples of Citizen Journalism in India:

- A story by a Citizen Journalist in India, was the headline of the entire news network in 2007. The story about the stripping of over 1000 men (including 90 year olds) in the village of Boraj, near Ajmer, shook the conscience of the whole nation. The local elected body at the grassroot level, the village Panchayat, had asked the men to strip to establish whether any of them was involved in the rape of a 35-year-old woman from the village.

- In India, Citizen Journalist captured, in his camera, how a man accused of snatching a chain was brutally beaten first by the mob and then by the police, who even tied him to his motorcycle and dragged him for a distance. The visuals caught the attention of the nation and media pressure coupled with widespread condemnation of the open abuse of human rights forced Bihar government to act against the policemen involved.

- Another story, by a Punjab based Citizen Journalist, exposed theft from trains that ferried oil. Many children, men and women filling their buckets with oil were shown and as a result many guilty officials lost their jobs.

- The national and international media picked up the story of how the forest department people looted and burnt down a tribal settlement for encroaching on forestland. Based in the remote corner of the country, Betul, this citizen reporter has broken many stories till now.

- When a woman stripped and walked on the street to draw attention to the harassment she faced from her in-laws, a Citizen Journalist quickly broke the story to mainstream media in 2008.

- Similar was the case of Gudia and Imrana - Gudia, the wife of a prisoner of war who married another man after her husband didn’t return from the war front; Imrana, a Muslim woman, who accused her own father-in-law of rape in 2005.
• In 2013, men came out in skirts to proclaim support to women against sexual harassment in Bangalore.

• Tehelka tapes brought an uproar of anger amongst the masses once they were put out.

• Net Neutrality in 2015 is the latest example of people’s participation in forming decisions in policy making about violation of Internet neutrality.

1.5 The Concept of Prosumer

With the rising popularity of social media and web-blogging, the role of the citizen journalist is becoming crucial with every passing day. He “has the opportunity to present a unique perspective — to breathe fresh air into a society herded by mainstream media.” Scholars in the field tend to attribute this trend as an expression of increasing worldwide migration patterns, and churns out a new term “prosumers”, first coined by Alvin Toffler (1980). And there is a good news. The prestigious Pulitzer Prizes in journalism, which honour the work of newspaper journalists, have now expanded to include online journalists, devoted to original news reporting.

Courtney Fowler (2012), explains “The internet has transformed its citizens from passive consumers of news into active participants who can assemble their own content from separate elements. Audiences have become a hybrid of the consumer and producer, which has in turn encouraged people to question not only political institutions but the media themselves. The online community has begun to assume the role of a ‘Fifth Estate’, becoming the watchdog of the press and the governing powers.” According to media commentators Kovack & Rosenstiel, “This new era of sometimes obsessive self-consciousness is certainly healthy for democracy, as it awakens news audiences to some of the limitations of the news they already receive” (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007).

Speaking at an e-Democracy conference on November 11, 2008, the BBC’s Director of news, Helen Boaden (2008), said, “Our journalism is now fully embracing the experiences of our audiences, sharing their stories, using their knowledge and
hosting their opinions. We are acting as a conduit between different parts of our audiences and we are being more open and transparent than we have ever been.”

In Vincent Miller's *Understanding Digital Culture*, the writer makes the argument of the idea how the lines between producer and consumers blurry. He says, “Producers are those that create content and cultural objects, and consumers are the audience or purchasers of those objects. With the advent of convergent new media and the plethora of choice in sources for information, as well as the increased capacity for individuals to produce content themselves, this shift away from producer hegemony to audience or consumer power would seem to have accelerated, thus eroding the producer-consumer distinction” (p87). “Prosumer” is the ending result of a strategy that has been increasingly used which encourages feedback between producers and consumers (prosumers), “which allows for more consumer influence over the production of goods.” (Miller, 2011).

There is a powerful emergence of the invisible, scattered omnipresent entity who can at a given time, not just change the direction of news flow but also the meaning derived from it. The citizen, who is not a trained journalist and certainly not in the business of news dissemination, participates knowingly or unwittingly in the give and take of news/information. A “prosumer” can now write, transmit, distribute, contribute, broadcast, circulate, publish, spread and disseminate news at his own convenience.

There are various Indian Citizen Journalism websites on the Internet that are opening and functionary, and are run by the citizen journalists of our country. Of them, here is a quick-pick from two famous websites: The Viewspaper and Meri News (on which Content Analysis will be conducted in future chapters) that tell us about citizen journalism and the concept of participation in their own words:

1. **The Viewspaper**: Tag Line: Voice of the Youth

   “The Viewspaper is India’s largest youth paper. It is the voice of the youth. Based on the citizen journalism concept it has young people from around the world expressing their views and thoughts.
Youth symbolize dreams. It symbolizes the power to break rules, to think beyond, to make a difference, to be the future. Express yourselves and we will take your views to the world. In our hearts we believe that we are part of a revolution that is growing. A revolution that is taking the world by storm.”

2. Meri News: Tag Line: News of the people by the people and for the people

“Burgeoning population, while on one hand champions India as the world's largest democracy, it sets forth newer challenges for us as a nation, towards building a responsible society. Evolution of technology and emergence of new modes of communication add bigger dimensions to this daunting task raising the expectations and information needs of the people on one hand while facilitating instant and seamless flow of information. Thus People to People (P2P) interaction is of paramount importance and rather inevitable.

Emanating from the need to empower democracy by providing a media to the people of the country to communicate with one and all, www.merinews.com is an effort to provide one such platform to interact and express. It is a news platform for collective wisdom.

Based on the concept of participatory media and citizen journalism, which transcend beyond the limitations of conventional media and allows citizens of the country to report, read, write, comment and debate news, views - happenings they find significant. In unique ways, it provides the tools of informing and opinion shaping to the people in both text and visual forms. Each submission is open to scrutiny of the people who bring in a rare diversity of views on a single issue. At the least, they tell you about the people's mood, and at higher levels, enlarge the original perspective to sum up the general view. This makes merinews unmistakably a powerful means to foster democratic values and innovative governance, thus marks the much-needed forward step for a more just and democratic dispensations, in which people are the winners.

Winner of India's BEST e-CONTENT AWARD for the Year 2006 Official Honoree at Webby Awards 2007, alongside the likes of Bloomberg.com & aolnews.com, cnn.com Ranking 5th in the world, in the participatory news category.”
1.6 Eleven Layers of Citizen Journalism by Steve Outing (2005):

![Image of an active participant creating news and information](image)

**Fig. 1.8 An active participant creates and disseminates news and information with powerful easy-to-use technologies**

Citizen journalism is one of the hottest buzzwords in the news business these days. Here are the different 11 layers of citizen journalism discussed in detail.

“1. Opening up to public comment: For some publishers, allowing anyone to publish under their brand name, enabling readers to attach comments to articles on the Web represents a start. At its simplest level, user comments offer the opportunity for readers to react to, criticize, praise or add to what’s published by professional journalists.

Examples:

- InsideVC.com
- Poynter Online
- ZDNet.com

2. The citizen add-on reporter: A small step up the ladder is to recruit citizen add-on contributions for stories written by professional journalists. It is more than just adding a User Comments link. It is that, with selected stories, solicit information and experiences from members of the public, and add them to the main story to enhance it.
3. **Open-source reporting**: The term open-source generally is understood to mean a collaboration between a professional journalist and his/her readers on a story, where readers who are knowledgeable on the topic are asked to contribute their expertise, ask questions to provide guidance to the reporter, or even do actual reporting which will be included in the final journalistic product.

Example:


4. **The citizen bloghouse**: Blogging started out as an everyman phenomenon and now, it seems, almost everyone has a blog. A great way to get citizens involved in a news Web site is to simply invite them to blog for it. A number of news sites do this now, and some citizen blogs are consistently interesting reads.

Examples:

- *Bluffton (S.C.) Today* Community Blogs.
- Lawrence.com Blogs
- *The Denver Post* Bloghouse.
- NJ.com Weblogs.

5. **Newsroom citizen transparency blogs**: The citizen transparency blog involves inviting a reader or readers to blog with public complaints, criticism, or praise for the news organization's ongoing work. A reader panel can be empowered via a publicly accessible blog to serve as citizen ombudsmen, of a sort, offering public commentary on how the news organization is performing.

Example:

- SpokesmanReview.com's News Is a Conversation blog.

6. **The stand-alone citizen-journalism site**: Edited version: This next step involves establishing a stand-alone citizen-journalism Web site that is separate from the core news brand. It means establishing a news-oriented Web site that is comprised entirely or nearly entirely of contributions from the community. Here, most such sites focus on very local news.
Examples:

- MyMissourian (Columbia, Mo., student-run site).
- WestportNow (Westport, Conn., independent site).
- iBrattleboro.com (Brattleboro, Vt., independent site).
- Greensboro (N.C.) News & Record YourNews

7. **The stand-alone citizen-journalism site: Unedited version**: This one is identical to No. 6 above, except that citizen submissions are not edited. What people write goes on the site: blemishes, misspellings and all. With this model of stand-alone citizen-journalism site, it is important to have safeguards against inappropriate content being posted.

Examples:

- Backfence.com (U.S. nationwide, with current beta sites in Reston and McLean, Va.). GoSkokie (Skokie, Ill., student-run site).
- NewWest
- DailyHeights.com

8. **Add a print edition**: In this, one can take either No. 6 or No. 7 and add a print edition of it. A number of newspapers have tried this, using a print edition distributed freely once a week as an insert into a traditional daily or weekly paper, or as a stand-alone print product delivered to people's doorsteps and/or delivered to local retailers and consumers.

Examples:

- MyTown (*The Daily Camera*, Boulder, Colo.).
- Neighbors (*The Dallas Morning News*, Texas).
- Northwest Voice (*The Bakersfield Californian*).
- YourHub (*Rocky Mountain News*, Denver, Colo.)
- Bluffton Today
9. **The hybrid: Professional + citizen journalism:** this step involves combination of citizen journalism with the work of professionals. South Korean site OhmyNews is the best example of this approach. It has recruited, to date, some 50,000 citizen reporters, who contribute articles for review by OhmyNews editorial staff. A small team of professional reporters also create content for the site. Citizen reports account for about 70% of the site's content, and pro reporters create the rest, so the emphasis clearly is on the citizen.

Examples:

- Bluffton Today (South Carolina; it also fits in layer No. 8 above, since it has a print edition).
- OhmyNews.com
- Greensboro (N.C.) News & Record YourNews

10. **Integrating professional and citizen journalism under one roof:** Imagine, then, a news Web site comprised of reports by professional journalists directly alongside submissions from everyday citizens. Here, we have professional journalists writing for some issue; and on the same page, the citizen journalists are also writing on the same issue. In a way, professional journalists are in a direct competition with the citizen journalists.

11. **Wiki journalism: Where the readers are editors:** The most well-known example is the WikiNews site, a spinoff of the famed Wikipedia public encyclopedia, which allows anyone to write and post a news story, and anyone to edit any story that's been posted. It's an experimental concept operating on the theory that the knowledge and intelligence of the group can produce credible, well-balanced news accounts.”

This research will study the phenomenon of Citizen Journalism and the Emergence of Fifth Estate in the Indian context and will explore its nature and implications, highlighting why and how it has the potential to be as important as in 21st century as the ‘Fourth Estate’ has been in the 18th century.