



1. Citizen Journalism: A Study of Reach and Impact

Dr. Ranjeet Kumar

Assistant professor

IIMT College of Management, Gautam Buddha Nagar

Email-ranjeet4352_gn@iimtindia.net

Abstract

Citizen journalism is a product of technological development. In fact, citizen journalism is that genre of journalism in which a non-professional person, in order to fulfil his personal duties and influenced by his consciousness, provides information about the events happening around him and transmits them to the entire human society. Under citizen journalism, a common citizen (who is not a journalist by profession) plays an important role in journalism. Sends current news to any newspaper organization or channel. In this, the way he sees the news and the meaning he understands. Sends it in the same form. Under citizen journalism, a common citizen is the reporter, analyst and editor of the news. In this he does not require any kind of training. In the presented research paper, a study of the reach of citizen journalism and its impact has been presented.

Key words- Citizen Journalism, Mainstream Journalism, Alternative Journalism, Citizen Journalism, News Media

Introduction

In this era of information revolution and the transformation from mission to profession, not only the dimensions of journalism changed, the weapons and tools also changed. Today there are small cameras and tape recorders. Today's journalists are capable of defying the vigilant eyes of the government and carrying out sting operations like the art of removing paper from the eye. Now on the Internet, even a common citizen can assume the role of a journalist and, going beyond the discipline of the editor and the policy of the newspaper, can post an incident as he sees it and understands its meaning on various sites, portals and blogs. Description of these incidents can also be sent to any newspaper, channel or radio. This form of journalism is very popular among internet savvy people and those who are keen on news.

The name of journalism emerging in the twenty-first century is citizen journalism. Under this, a citizen (who is not a journalist by profession) plays an active role in collecting the facts of an incident, writing its report and analyzing the incident. It was only due to the intervention of a citizen journalist in the case of Benazir Bhutto's death that the government paper was



questioned. It was this citizen journalist who had captured the picture of a man pointing a pistol in the air on his mobile. This picture ruined the argument of the Pakistan government, according to which Benazir Bhutto died after colliding with the sunroof. It was citizen journalists who brought the ferocity of the tsunami across the world in December 2004. These journalists were tourists and common citizens (local people) who had gone on holiday to the beaches of Indonesia, Thailand and India.

Objectives of study

- Introductory study of citizen journalism.
- Study of the reach of citizen journalism.

Meaning and definition of citizen journalism

Citizen journalism is the result of this technological development. In fact, citizen journalism is that genre of journalism in which a non-professional person, in order to fulfill his personal duties and influenced by his consciousness, provides information about the events happening around him and transmits them to the entire human society.

Dan Gillamor, while defining citizen journalism in his book *We the media and Grassroots Journalism*, has written - "Citizen Journalism is the Journalism by the people to the people."

In simple words, citizen journalism is a democratic form of journalism. Under which a citizen standing at the lower level does journalism for other citizens.

According to Preeti Patnaik, Head of Department of Journalism at New York University stern school of Business, 'Eager to exploit the rapidly lowering cost of publishing, technology on the web has created opportunities for citizen journalism' while there is tremendous responsibility on people to become journalists since they need to be fearless most citizen journalists are coming in on their own terms.

Mainstream journalism has its limitations. The market and law bind him within its limits. In such a situation, all the expressions remain lying in some corner. The cheap means of computers, internet video, video editing etc. have provided citizens with the medium through which they can give voice to those expressions which are not able to come before the society through mainstream journalism. In simple words, citizen journalism is that university. Which does not have any institute or campus of its own, but any citizen can study and teach any discipline there.



Citizen journalism means a journalism based on partnership in which citizens themselves play an important role in collecting, analyzing, reporting and publishing information. Shane Byman and Prince Willis' report on citizen journalism, We Media: High Audiences Are Saving the Future of News and Information, aims to provide independent, credible, factual, relevant information.

Under citizen journalism, a common citizen (who is not a journalist by profession) plays an important role in journalism. Sends current news to any newspaper organization or channel. In this, the way he sees the news and the meaning he understands. Sends it in the same form. Under citizen journalism, a common citizen is the reporter, analyst and editor of the news. In this he does not require any kind of training.

In fact, citizen journalism is a wide-ranging discipline. Which is multidimensional and comprehensive. But the way journalism has developed in the last decade makes it clear that no matter how much capital is there, no matter how efficient the management is, it is no longer possible for any media organization to cover every news. In such a situation, citizen journalism serves the interest of media institutions on one hand and on the other hand, it provides an opportunity to the journalist sitting inside the citizen to do journalism.

Citizen journalism has not started in India in the same way as it has created its own identity in many countries of the world. Despite this, there is immense potential for Indian citizen journalism. The impact of citizen journalism of the common man is now gaining momentum very fast. The Right to Information Act has given unexpected impetus to citizen journalism. Despite the immense possibilities, the challenges are also no less. There is a complaint in the mainstream media that citizen journalism does not take care of objectivity, factuality and impartiality. Sometimes some bloggers also post obscene comments and nude pictures in their blogs. This is a perverted form of journalism.

Modern trends of citizen journalism

There has been a period of change from time to time in the history of journalism. This is the only profession in which people have been considering their work area as a laboratory and doing new experiments. They have also been giving birth to new trends. When information technology reached the peak of its development in the last decade of the twentieth century, the number of such experiments suddenly increased. In fact, the first decade of the twenty-first century is going to hold an important place in the history of journalism. Many trends were born simultaneously in this decade. It also flourished completely. Created dimensions of these new



trends and also made people realize their power. In this era, both forms of journalism, print and electronic, were seen in fear in their respective camps. Circulation numbers and TRP The doubt about victory or defeat in the cut-throat battle has also made a new kind of media fear public. 'Sting operation', casting couch, blogging, online journalism, citizen journalism etc. are the trends of this era of alternative journalism which have changed the shape, color and thinking of journalism. The scope has become unlimited and the demand for defining the rights has started rising. On the lines of 'everything is visible', everything about which there used to be hesitation till now is being served. Sting operations and citizen journalism are prominent among the trends that have proven to be most transformative.

The word 'sting', derived from American slang, was used in America for those covert operations which were conducted by the police to trap a criminal. Its popularity increased rapidly around 1970. It is not known when the word came into use and became synonymous with catching criminals. Gradually these sting operations became a part of journalism. These very quickly became an initiative to expose social evils. The credit for bringing it into vogue in the Indian journalism world is given to 'Tarun Tejpal' of 'Tehelka.com'. After this, it became the most important trend which was rapidly assimilated in electronic media. Many such operations like 'Operation Duryodhan', 'Operation Chakravyuh', etc. were conducted which gave new meaning to journalism. Even though sting operations have become a weapon to increase the TRP of television channels, they have played an important role in changing the scenario of journalism.

Many types of technical terms are used during sting operations. Electronic Snooping, Operation Pin, Agent Provocateur, Betkar, Cops in Shops, Casting Couch and Abscam etc. are such terms. Electronic snooping means stealing private conversations. This work is easily done through body mic, pen recorder or telephone wires. Operation PIN means Internet deception. In this, such websites are prepared which mislead and attract the criminals. This network of websites is called honeypot. Agent Provocateur is an important link in the sting operation. In this, by being present among the common man or the target group of the sting, an environment is created where the person involved in the crime can come in front of the intelligence cameras. A clear picture of the criminals should be captured in the camera. Betkar is a vehicle used to catch thieves. It has a system including bullet proof glass, video camera to record every moment during operation.



‘Abscam’ and Cops in Shops are two important operations of America that gave rise to sting operations. Journalism all over the world is following them. Abscam is a 1980 U.S. There is a scandal. F.B.I. In this sting operation conducted by the CPI(M), members of a national party were caught taking bribe. Similarly, Cops in Shops is part of the alcohol law enforcement program. In which people under 21 years of age are caught while consuming alcohol. Casting is a type of couch sting. In this, people involved in crime and immoral activities are fraudulently trapped by luring them in front of secret cameras.

However, sting operations have become established in important parts of journalism. After electronic media, now it is tried and introduced in print media also. Such is the popularity of sting operations that now a market for ready-made operations has also developed. And circulation number and TRP. Newspaper channels participating in the race are using them extensively.

There is also a debate going on whether sting is journalism or just a game. One thing that is at stake in this is the credibility of journalism. They are less in favor of implicating someone and making his privacy public. When these operations become a part of sponsored journalism instead of exposing abuses of power and irregularities, questions will surely arise. If the flow of sting is not regulated then people's attention will be diverted from it. People will lose focus on what is being covered and how it is being covered. This important trend will become meaningless.

Blogs are a trend that has made journalism unblogged. Blog means a personal diary which is available on the internet. Internet users read it and give their opinion. Started in 1994 under the name Weblog. By taking the form of a blog, it has now become a tool for distributing information across a wide spectrum. According to the blog search engine ‘Technoratey’, there are more than 10 lakh blogs in India by the end of 2016. In which most of the users are middle class. In fact the blog has become such a platform for expression. By attending which anyone can express their views openly to anyone anywhere.

Even before the advent of the twenty-first century, almost all the major newspapers of the country had become a part of online journalism by connecting to the Internet. In fact, the development of information technology and changes in people's lifestyle have reduced the tendency to read or watch news. A person who works for almost eighteen hours out of twenty-four hours a day, now sees news of his choice on his computer screen. This trend of online journalism or cyber journalism or webcast also gave new dimensions to journalism. It has



become a common thing to search the news from the internet and serve it to the channel with less expense and less effort.

The most important trend of journalism is citizen journalism. It has left no stone unturned in giving a new shape to the media of its time. Citizen journalism is also a journalistic trend imported from the West. It has assimilated very rapidly into Indian journalism. The trend of turning viewers and readers into news reporters has now become common.

Main tools of citizen journalism

In mass communication, it is necessary to have a medium for communication. Communication is not possible without medium. Citizen journalism has also, riding on the medium, provided various mediums to the citizens, which have not only made citizen journalism possible, but have also helped in making citizen journalism very cheap and accessible. The citizen uses these mediums to transmit the news/information received by him. New technology and increasing education level and awareness level in the society have provided opportunity to citizen journalists to communicate their ideas and information. The following mediums are being used extensively as the main medium of citizen journalism.

1. Blog writing
2. Mobile messaging/video clips
3. Television
4. Print medium

Reach and impact of citizen journalism: content analysis

The current need for citizen journalism is due to corporatization and professionalism of journalism. Earlier the media was in the form of a mission. After some time of independence, the influence of capitalism increased on it. Structural rigidity and egotism developed in the mainstream media. Journalists sitting inside news organizations and institutions started considering themselves beyond all kinds of criticism, improvement and change. They felt that the way they presented what they considered to be news and the way they analyzed it was 100 percent correct. The audience should accept it as it is, but the expansion of sources of information and the right to information have challenged their self-centered views. Now no mainstream journalist can present any incident in an arbitrary and incomplete manner nor can



it ignore it. In the present era, citizen journalists have made public the articles and political pressures of well-known news organizations.

These days, there is a lot of turmoil and conflict in the media around the world regarding citizen journalism. Although this term is relatively new for Indian journalism, a stir has started regarding it in the mainstream media as well and this journalism is continuously growing. Some time ago, when senior journalist Rajdeep Sir Desai launched his new channel, he had made citizen journalism the main theme in the promotional hoardings. The channel invited common citizens to become 'citizen journalists' and said that any common citizen can send important news and clips.

CNN-IBN, under its Citizen Journalist campaign, from time to time solicits video clips/footage from viewers on monsoon, social movements and important social issues. Citizen journalism is also being started in other media organizations and institutions, but till now, except in isolated cases, no specific footage or clips have come, despite this, channels and organizations keep trying to encourage citizen journalists many times. He hopes that maybe some sting news will be found in the future.

Like CNN-IBN, today some other channels have also started citizen journalism. Star News, E.TV etc. Hindustan newspaper has also taken the initiative of citizen journalism in the name of 'Aap Bhi Patrakar Hain'. Radio City Fm The channel has also offered information to the common citizen about traffic and monsoon in the city in 'City Hustle'. Right now we are seeing only one form of citizen journalism on channels, but in the coming time, if we look at other countries of the world, this idea will gain even more strength. In fact, there is ambiguity, confusion, apprehensions and controversies regarding citizen journalism because it is still developing. Today, thanks to citizen journalism, the truth of many mafias and ostentation has been brought before the world.

Both pros and cons of citizen journalism have come to the fore. Advocates say that the grammar of television says that the picture of the occasion attracts more viewers. News channel cameras will not be present on every occasion. In such a situation, if an aware citizen takes photographs of incidents and accidents and provides them to the news channel, then what is the harm? People standing in the opposition say that by promoting citizen journalism, the trend of dismissing journalism training as unnecessary is not only being promoted. Rather, the role is being prepared to reduce the labor cost of journalists. Some initiatives have been taken in the field of citizen journalism in the last few years. A lot still remains to be done. Right to



Information has opened new doors for citizen journalism. There is another form of this in the mainstream media, in which the news is asking its readers to not only comment on the news, report and feature of one of its professional reporters or writers but also to add some new information or information to it.

Possibilities and Challenges

Both pros and cons of citizen journalism have come to the fore. Advocates say that the grammar of television says that the picture of the occasion attracts more viewers. News channel cameras will not be present on every occasion. In such a situation, if an aware citizen takes photographs of incidents and accidents and provides them to the news channel, then what is the harm? People standing in the opposition say that by promoting citizen journalism, the trend of dismissing journalism training as unnecessary is not only being promoted. Rather, the role is being prepared to reduce the labor cost of journalists. These people are considering the credibility of citizen journalism as a threat to journalism. However, at present all the news channels and some newspapers are using citizen journalists extensively.

Some initiatives have been taken in the field of citizen journalism in the last few years. A lot still remains to be done. Right to Information has opened new doors for citizen journalism. A lot can be learned from the experiments being conducted on citizen journalism in other parts of the world. Some relevant examples are as follows – ‘Oh My News’ in South Korea is a commercially successful example of citizen journalism.

Citizen journalism consists of various blogs that raise concerns and concerns from various sectors and professions. There is another form of this in mainstream media. In which the news is asking its readers not only to submit comments on the news, reports and features of any of their professional reporters or writers but also to add some new information or information to it.

This means that citizen journalism has unlimited possibilities as well as challenges. Its influence is also increasing continuously. Mainstream media complains that it does not take into account the basic principles of citizen journalism such as objectivity, factuality, impartiality and balance etc. There is some truth in this also.

Conclusion

Media is the only profession in which people have been considering their work area as a laboratory and doing new experiments. When information technology reached the peak of its



development in the last decade of the twentieth century, the number of such experiments suddenly increased. Many trends were born simultaneously in this decade. In this era, both forms of journalism, print and electronic, were seen in fear in their respective camps. Circulation numbers and TRP The doubt about victory or defeat in the cut-throat battle has also made a new kind of media fear public.

Sting operation, casting couch, blogging, online journalism, citizen journalism and Wikipedia are the trends of this era of journalism which have changed the shape, tone and thinking of the entire journalism. The scope has become unlimited and the demand for defining the rights has started rising. On the lines of 'everything is visible', everything about which there used to be hesitation till now is being served. Among the trends which have proved to be the most transformative, the prominent ones under new media are sting operation and citizen journalism. The influence and reach of citizen journalism is increasing.

References and bibliography

Kumar, Suresh. (2002). *Internet Journalism*. New Delhi: Takshila Publications.

Michael, Mandiberg.(2012).*The Social media Reader*. NY: New York University Press.

Dadhich, Balendu. (April-June, 2012). *Citizen Journalism: challenge or opportunity*. Magazine- Media Mimamsa. Page Number-66

Chopra, Dhananjay.(2007). *Journalism from then till now*. Lucknow: Avadh Publishing House. Page number 104.

Dr. Ramshankar. (Ed.). Student Blog. https://reeta-yashvantblog.blogspot.in/2014/12/blog-post_1.html

Pradhan, Anand. http://asbmassindia.blogspot.in/2012/01/blog-post_6680.html
