

Certificate Course in 'Citizen Journalism and Citizen Media Leaders'

A. About Citizen Journalism

The 'Citizen Journalism' is news created by amateur reporters, who were previously seen as audiences, viewers and readers. The term 'Citizen Journalism' refers to the active participation and expression of the citizen on contemporary issues. Members of the society actively playing role in the process of collecting, reporting, analyzing, disseminating news and information other than professional journalists are citizen journalists. Citizen journalism (also known as public, participatory, democratic or street journalism) is a voluntary contribution in providing reliable information on relevant issues by the society and for the society.



The Citizen Journalism mainly points out:

- Freedom of expression
- Revelation and expression of real social problems (first hand information from the source)
- Reliable user generated information and suggestions
- No limit of using professional journalism tools
- Collective efforts on emergence of social issues
- Disseminating information using advance technology and media tools
- Modern age citizen-weapon to fight for common man's rights

B. Background

Citizen Journalism with its variants in Public Journalism or Civic Journalism acquired the status of a movement in the early 2000s, particularly in the United States. But the origins of Citizen Journalism are as old as journalism, when pamphlets and reports were issued by citizens.

In the process of developing and disseminating the information through the modern media tools people found their own ways to reach to the corners of the world and exhibit the independent and collective efforts towards their social responsibilities and solutions.

Modern technology has helped citizens to capture pictures, video-audio recordings of the relevant problem and issues. Gradually, it has found its means and has taken a shape and people have reported and written on each and every subject matter of society irrespective of their educational and professional background.



The term, Citizen Journalism derived from South Korean Online entrepreneur, Oh Yeon Ho's who declared "every citizen is a reporter" in 2000. The phenomenon, 'Citizen Journalism' expanded its worldwide influence in 2008 in spite of continuing concerns over whether 'citizen' journalists were real journalists. Citizens, living in disaster zones provided instant text and visual reporting from the scene.

Off-late the citizen journalism acquired all kinds of social media tools, including blogging, Facebook, and Twittering and now it is emerging as an alternative media ecology that has gained attention of the media professionals and academics alike.

C. Why Citizen Journalism?

The 'Citizen Journalism' epitomizes the belief that the experiences of people personally involved with an issue present a different – and often more complete – with pictures of events that can be derived from the perspective of an outsider.

The need for citizens as journalists and for citizen journalists has been increasingly felt as media companies with their business and professional news gathering models do not necessarily commit enough resources to covering issues that beset a democracy such as ours or do not have any incentive to cover problems from a wide swath of society. But not covering these problems and issues does not wish away the reality. And that is precisely where citizen journalists can reclaim the conversation. It needs to be remembered that the freedom of the press in India is an extension of the freedom of expression given to each citizen.

The significance of the Public Journalism can be witnessed in India currently through Anti Corruption Movement. Public forums are full of anti corruption slogans and dialogues. And all websites, news papers and magazines have been a medium to take public poll/ vote. Anna Hazare, a man who introduced Jan Lokpal bill (citizens' ombudsman bill) against the corrupt policies of the government, has been able to outreach all over the world and got support from 1.2 billion Indians overnight. The power of this democratic journalism is such that government is ready to surrender to wishes of the citizens on issues impacting our society at large.



This was never before so much easy to expand any news in seconds to the whole world and get quick replies on every post. If somebody ever wanted to outreach any audience he had to go through the gates between the society and the common people i.e. Print / Electronic media and waited for the approval. But this time any man can take the initiative and report on any incident happening in any place in this world. New media tools shortened the limits and made it all in one-touch- go process.

D. Who Are Citizen Journalists?

Anyone can be a citizen journalist -- seniors, students, scholars, homemakers, the homeless, immigrants, nuns, etc.

E. Challenges in Citizen Journalism Reporting

There we find three types of citizen journalism, print media CJ, Electronic media CJ and Internet CJ. The communication and reporting come under the first two can be considered as falling in standard format of journalism as these two mediums are kept safe by the gate keepers. But the last type, which takes help of internet medium having the largest customers and consumers, without gate keeping can question on the reliability of the source and the medium and the information. The professionals find no feedback system and editing system in this step and which suspects raw information directly coming from the source.



Questions which can be hit on the Internet Citizen Journalism:

- a. Quality of the content
- b. Credibility of the source
- c. Language and literature
- d. filtration of the content

A vocational course on Citizen Journalism can fill such gaps and create enthusiastic and promising democratic journalists who can deploy new line media (multimedia) and alternative media (internet) to capture, report, analyze and spread the information and help society and citizenship grow and have success in all perspectives.

F. IIVET & DEF Citizen Journalism Course Benefits

- ❖ Designed as an ***Online programme***
- ❖ Conducted by ***professionals and experts of IGNOU People's University***
- ❖ Provides critical ***training in new media, citizen journalism and empowerment*** to old and new generation of citizens.

G. Mode of Course Delivery

The course is online instructor led training. After the enrollment of 100 entries, applicants will be guided to respective instructors who shall guide his / her students to complete the project work and assignments leading towards final award of certificates. The mode of communication will be largely Internet driven.



IIVET & DEF Citizen Journalism Course

Course Outline

Duration: 3 Months

Citizen Journalism course content is not based on community or collaborative journalism or professional journalism. The idea behind the course is to arm the citizen with the new media technology tools and provide guidance for using journalism in an exquisite form. Course is divided into 6 units and every unit contains one project at the end of the unit.

Unit I: Conceptualizing Citizen's Journalism

1. Background of Citizen's Journalism
 2. Changing notions of Journalism
 3. Platform for Citizen Journalists
- Project - I

Unit II: Essential skills of a Citizen Journalist

1. What is News
 2. Types of New
 3. Basics of News Writing
 4. News Selection
 5. Importance of Interviews
 6. Art of Interviewing
- Project - II

Unit III: Ethical Conceptualization of Citizen Journalism

1. Media Laws and Ethics
 2. Issues of Credibility
 3. Issues of Punctuality and Fairness
 4. Importance of verifying information
- Project - III

Unit IV: Citizen Journalism & New Media

1. A brief introduction to New Media
 2. Blogs and Citizen Journalism
 3. Websites and Citizen Journalism
 4. Integrating multimedia content
 5. Mobiles and Citizen Journalism
 6. Audio clips, podcasting and Citizen Journalism
 7. Basics of digital photography
 8. Basics of videography
- Project - IV

Unit V: Folk Media for Citizen Journalism

- Project - V

Unit VI: Community Radio

- Project - VI