CGNET SWARA
JOURNALISM AND GOVERNANCE
IN RURAL INDIA

BY
SURABHI INAMDAR

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES
(MCS)

June 17, 2018

SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

ABSTRACT

CGNet Swara is a voice based citizen journalism platform, created for the rural and the marginalized people of rural Chhattisgarh. This system enables the callers to record their issues of local interest, as well as listen to other messages recorded by other people. The rural communities usually do not get any attention from the mainstream media and hence the problems of the tribal people remain unsolved. To resolve this problem, Shubhranshu Choudhary started CGNet Swara for helping the tribal people. In 2004, CGNet an online listserv was introduced for people to discuss their problems. As the Internet penetration is low in the rural parts of Chhattisgarh, CGNet Swara was introduced as a voice portal platform which does not need Internet. Since it was launched in 2010, CGNet Swara has received over 575,000 calls, over 6900 published stories and 287 reports of problems that were solved through CGNet Swara. This article examines the Journalism and Governance of CGNet Swara, which has helped rural people. To understand the good work done by CGNet Swara and its team, I will be focusing on three main case studies of local village people to show how CGNet Swara is a success in the rural regions of Chhattisgarh.

KEYWORDS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I hereby declare this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person no material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning, except where due acknowledgement is made in the acknowledgements.

Signed:

Surabhi Inamdar

June 17, 2018.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Rural communities in India are often under served by the mainstream media. A vast majority of India's rural population is essentially voiceless. The mainstream media mainly talks about the Bollywood stars and politicians who claim to speak for and about all. The Entertainment industry is huge in India, but the betterment of the country is an important issue to address. Then the question arises, what about the 80 million members of India's tribal communities who occupy India's 'media dark zone' with which journalists, politicians and international NGOs rarely, if ever deal (Harriet, 2015).

Chhattisgarh is a state of India, which mainly comprises of tribal communities. Only 0.5% of homes in the Chhattisgarh region have access to Internet, the community radio is strictly controlled, and the high illiteracy rates prevent the use of newspapers or magazines. Shubhranshu Choudhary, the founder of CGNet Swara, realized that there was a very simple solution to this problem. In every village, there is at least one mobile phone and there must be a way to utilize this technology in a way that assigns these people and enables them to get their voices heard. That's when he came up with CGNet Swara, which he describes as 'village level activism mobile media' (Harriet, 2015). CGNet Swara gives the members of the tribal communities, an opportunity to speak about the injustice they face, through a simple means of a mobile phone call. It is a platform for the non-English speaking majority of India, which uses the power of user-generated content to amplify their voice (Saha, 2012).

This concept sounds relatively unequivocal. But then how to reach the depths of a media dark zone? Logistically, it is problematic. In the tribal areas, communication is difficult and the transport is limited, there are very few bus services between different villages and the condition of the roads is awful. Villagers staying in very remote areas have a tendency of fleeing from their

houses when people from the outside world arrive, that is their concern and suspicion about the outside world who in their experience mean harm. They never have any outside world exposure and hence tend to be away from it. Additionally, the hierarchical nature of the Indian society means that the villagers cannot accept that their problems have any importance to the city people (Harriet, 2015). Yet, CGNet Swara activists came up with an innovative way of engaging these villagers who are vigilant and have little understanding of things like technology, politics and the world which is beyond their immediate surroundings.

The rapid penetration of mobile phones in the world's low income regions has caused widespread interest in building mobile phone systems and applications to benefit health, education, government and other social needs (Mudliar, Donner and Thies, 2013). Mobile phones nowadays have a variety of features and functions. However, each and every mobile handset has a microphone and a speaker and voice which is a universally shared approach to communication. Hence, it offers universality, affordability and ease of use (Mudliar, Donner and Thies, 2013). The social media revolution in the last decade was largely powered by the advances in communication technology, mostly by the spread of Internet. User generated content that integrates the power of each individual to get their message across to the whole world has had a transformative quality that has made geographical and social boundaries irrelevant (Saha, 2012). Unfortunately, despite the claims made by India, of being an information technology powerhouse, the computing technologies and Internet have minimal impact on the objective living conditions of the majority of Indians. Is any there similar paradigm or an altering platform, cheaper and more accessible to the rural population of India? The answer is CGNet Swara (Saha, 2012).

CGNet Swara activists travel to the rural areas of the poorest states in India to promote CGNet Swara and teaching villagers how to use it, through the medium of a puppet show, folk music, street theatre and dance (Harriet, 2015). These shows clarify complex issues such as political corruption, ineffective development projects and mainstream media, on a level that they can understand. The activists also try to eliminate the hierarchy that exists, which makes the

oppressed members of the society feel worthless and makes them silent about the problems they face in their day-to-day life. Once these voices are heard by the mainstream media of India, only then can it be claimed as a truly democratic country (Harriet, 2015). In these villages, there are very few television sets and no newspaper distribution, hence to reach to the people out there, the medium of participation should have to be voice-based. Only this would allow universal access and build on the Adivasi tradition of oral expression (Agrawal, 2013). Adivasis are the tribal people living in rural areas.

In this dissertation, I will be focusing on CGNet Swara, a free voice portal introduced to the tribal communities of Chhattisgarh, which helps them to solve their own problems, and most importantly, by using their own voice. I will be discussing how CGNet Swara is successful in local communities, which is tied up with helping the rural Adivasi people, and also how it is used as means of promotion. There are four main areas associated with CGNet Swara, which will be discussed in the Literature Review chapter. The next chapter concentrates on two big areas, Politics and Media in Chhattisgarh and Background and Operations of CGNet Swara. This will be followed by the chapter, which discusses the understanding of the Case Studies and Newsworthiness as a whole, followed by the most important chapter of Locating Journalism and Governance in CGNet Swara.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The development in technology has changed the way we live and communicate in today's world. It has revised the way we get information, communicate and interact with each other. Mobile phones, cameras, Internet and blogging have become an effective tool of communication and interaction with the outside world. Social media and new media have drastically changed the outlook and functioning of mass communication and also functioning of media. The mainstream media and social media go well together. As social media is used widely across the world, mainstream media news are uploaded on the social networking sites where everyone can read. The revolutions in technology have impacted on journalism in more ways than one - spontaneous information; user generated content and interactive news (Mishra and Krishnaswami, 2015). Journalism has been changed for the journalists as well as the audience: the communication is no longer one-way, but has become highly interactive.

This chapter talks about the literature related to the objectives of this study. It also explains the four major concepts- Journalism and Fourth Estate/Watchdog role, Development Journalism, Service Journalism and Citizen Journalism. All these concepts play an important role in understanding CGNet Swara, its significance in various forms of Journalism and is also a powerful example of all these concepts. Hence with the help of these four concepts, we can understand how CGNet Swara works and helps the people who are desperate to have an ear, to listen to their problems and also to solve them.

JOURNALISM AND FOURTH ESTATE/WATCHDOG ROLE

According to Thomas Carlyle (1840), Edmund Burke in 1787 first applied the term 'Fourth Estate' to the press in the eighteenth century. The term refers to print journalism and newspapers and news media as a whole (Coetzee, 2016). It describes the journalists' role in representing the interests of the people in relation to the business and political elites who claim to be doing things in our names (Crosling, 2013). The fourth estate surrounds all of those who report the news. William Safire (1982, p. 1) says, "Describing journalists and the news outlets for which they work as members of the fourth estate, is an acknowledgment of their influence and status among the greatest powers of a nation." The idea of Fourth Estate signifies that whatever the formal constitution, genuine political power resides in the informal role of the press, which in turn derives from the relationship between the press and its readers. The idea of press as a Fourth Estate has rested upon the overlapping ideals of the relationship between the press and the readers (Hampton, 2010). The press serves as an agency of public discussion, where the conflicting ideas and interests compete with one another until the truth comes out.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the early modernization theories accepted a basic and easy connection between the spread of access to modern forms of mass communications, economic development and the procedure of democratization (Norris, 2008). Urbanization and the spread of literacy lead to the growing access to modern day advancements, for example, mobile phones, daily newspapers, radio and television, all of which laid the reason for an educated citizenry ready to participate productively in political affairs (Lerner, 1958). However, by the late 1960s and early 1970s, the presumption that the modernization process involved a series of sequential steps gradually fell out of fashion. There was a growing recognition that widening public access to daily newspapers, radio and television was deficient by itself to promote democracy and development, as these media could be utilized to maintain autocracies, to strengthen capitalism and to combine the power of media oligopolies. The news media is most effective in

strengthening the process of democratization, good governance, and human development where journalists function as a watchdog (Norris, 2000).

The concept of press as Fourth Estate was threatened by the growing concentration of media ownership in the twentieth century. At the same time, twentieth-century British and American critics have noted the tendency of journalism to identify too closely with the perspective of the state (Hampton, 2010). But these developments have jeopardized the notion of independence, that is crucial for the function of the press as a Fourth Estate. The term 'Fourth Estate' originally referred to newspapers but since the early twentieth century, it has been extended to the broadcast media and also to the Internet, so that questions concerning ownership, commercialization, and the role of the state apply to these more recent media as well (Barnett and Gaber, 2001). Today's journalism is in the period of transition and change, where the Internet is playing a huge role. The two main roles for the change are globalization of the media industries and, the development of new electronic communications technologies (Tumber, 2001). The Internet has helped the Fourth Estate to evolve and has also broadened people's perspective.

In a journalist's role as a watchdog, the new media channels can function to promote government's transparency, accountability, and public scrutiny of decision-makers in power, by highlighting policy failures, mismanagement by public officials, corruption in the judiciary, and scandals in the corporate sector (Donohue and Tichenor, 1995). According to Edmund Burke, the Fourth Estate has been regarded as one of the classic checks and balances in the division of powers (Kocher, 1986). Investigative journalism can open the government's record to external investigation and critical assessment, and hold the experts responsible for their activities, regardless of whether public sector organizations, non-profit organizations, or privately owned businesses. Also, investigative journalism plays a big part in uncovering bribery and corruption and in uncovering human rights violations (Coetzee, 2016). In particular countries, it has explored the impact of the news media on corruption. Brunetti and Weder (2003) found that there was less corruption in nations with a free press. The reason is that the journalist's role as watchdogs

11

promote the transparency of government's decision-making process, and thereby expose and hinder misuse of public office, misbehaviour, and financial scandals (Brunetti and Weder, 2003). In contrast, the control of the news media is utilized to fortify the energy of imperious administrations and to discourage feedback of the government by independent journalists. (Sussman, 2001).

While considering the contemporary role of the Fourth Estate, it is essential to perceive that different circumstances make distinctive demands and raise different assumptions about the role of the news media. The Fourth Estate is a mix of ambition and reality and survives due to its ability to accommodate a range of definitions, changing emphasis and meaning over time (Schultz, 1998). The definition of the Fourth Estate has adapted in response to evolving political, economic and social times. Developments in the professionalization of journalism have seen these groups claim custody of the Fourth Estate ideal which is currently focused on disclosure and scrutiny (Boyce, 1978).

DEVELOPMENT JOURNALISM

Fourth Estate talks about the powerful interests of the society whereas Development Journalism is playing an active role for the other end of the spectrum, like the developing nations as a whole. Development journalism is a method of journalism that aims to promote improvements in living conditions for people in developing countries (Kelleher, 2014). Fair (1988) remarked that 'in terms of conceptualizing Development Journalism, no consensus was found' referring to the difficulty of applying theoretical definitions to Development Journalism or national development. However, there are some general definitions such as 'any news that relates to the primary, secondary or tertiary needs of a country's population', 'news that satisfies the needs of a country's population and contributes to self-reliance', 'news that is related to the development or to social, economic or political problems of a country' (Kelleher, 2014). Conceptualizing Development Journalism means considering a journalism practice from theoretical and ethical perspectives that are different than those common to the western practice. Haque (1986, p. 27) presented that, "The western media system have negative traits, elite individual and event orientation, emphasis on human conflict, interest and drama." Some common elements of Development Journalism include its promotional intent, focus on process rather than the events, and its participatory structure.

The definitions of Development Journalism over a period of time have reflected the evolution of the theory and practice of development communication. Hence, the definitions are refocused and reprioritized. For example, Musa & Domatob (2007) described Development Journalism as a 'biased view of not only what the media does but also what the role of journalists ought to be in the society.' The purpose of Development Journalism as explained by Domatob and Hall (1983, p. 29) is "to contribute to national development goals, inform citizens of relevant governmental policies, introduce national leaders, foster political stability, promote national integration and educate." Development Journalism was sometimes defined prescriptively, but more regularly it was defined descriptively, as simply as, journalism in developing countries or about development topics (Ngomba, 2010). An Indian guide to Development Journalism similarly gave direction for

13

style and technique, monitoring public services, exposing social evils, promoting empowerment, reporting emerging India, utilizing the right to information, and sources (Bhattacharjea, 2005).

One set of studies has identified Development Journalism with social and communitarian reporting of news about rural, education, health, and economic issues that affect a majority of people (Haque, 1986; Shah, 1989 and Vilanilam, 1975). It is primarily concerned with news about social circumstances, challenges, and involvement related to the lives of the lower class, the vast number of dispossessed and distressed people. A focus on development issues also demands that the press examines critically the reality of post-colonial societies, domestic and international programs aimed to redress social conditions, and the obstacles to the improvement of people's lives. Development Journalism also refers to reporting that brings out popular voices in the identification of problems and solutions (Aggarwala, 1979; Golding, 1974 and Ogan, 1982). These goals require a major reshuffling of the priorities of journalism. Instead of providing entertainment, journalism should educate people about issues of significant public interest. A focus on ordinary people should be prioritized over elite information. Coverage of recent events should be replaced by reporting long-term, structural processes underlying crucial issues in people's lives. Public goals should prevail over commercial principles. Development Journalism is expected to influence development policies by indicating issues that need attention, offering perspectives and solutions, and monitoring policies and programs. More recently, it has been redefined in terms of journalism that promotes human emancipation and citizen participation.

Recently, the grassroots empowerment expansion in Development Journalism was compared to Western movements which begun in the 1990s towards the public or civic journalism. Banda (2006) noted that, 'one can readily detect the notion of a subjective journalistic engagement in the emergence of the so-called 'public' or 'civic' journalism movements. Similarities between Development Journalism and Citizen Journalism stemmed from the increased democratization and representation of ordinary citizens in either the newsroom or the news as whole, and an aim of 'problem solving rather than problem-exposing reporting' (Oxwich, 2010, pg. 242). Increased

citizen participation was conjectured to change the frame through which the news was presented, in order to improve the potential outcomes of reporting (Banda, 2006).

SERVICE JOURNALISM

Development Journalism helps the whole communities in better infrastructure and facilities, while Service Journalism is helping local communities to solve their everyday problems. Service Journalism claims to give help with an entire range of activities, associated with the ordinary interests of its audience, extending from health issues and consumer rights to travel advice and lifestyle information (Eide, 1999). It is the way the news media provides the audience with information, help and advice about the problems of everyday life- in light of the theory of the public sphere and the growth of sub politics fostered by reflexive modernization (Eide and Knight, 1999). Service Journalism addresses two main types of daily problems- grievances and risks. However, it is argued that Service Journalism also addresses a hybrid social identity- part citizen, part consumer and part client; that is oriented to resolving problems of everyday life in ways that can combine individualistic and collective, political forms of response (Eide and Knight, 1999). Eide and Knight (1999) also talk about Service Journalism as having a pattern of problems and resolutions. It focuses on an individual issue or an answer and should be considered more than just a simple section of news.

Eide and Knight (1999) argue that Service Journalism is connected more broadly with the issues related to public sphere. It may help in combining social movements and arm advocacy groups with information. Remarkably, Hanitzsch (2005) notes that Service Journalism represents a fundamental shift in the social function of the news with journalism moving away from being an information distributor to helping select relevant information. At its core, Service Journalism is a distinct form of news that is based on the idea of community. According to Dewey (1954), this role ties into much older ideas of social function of news in the public sphere.

Beckett and Mansell (2008) and Jarvis (2006) thought that Service Journalism has much more in common with 'Network Journalism' in this Web 2.0 era. Citizens are involved in the news making process, but it is a process of citizens and the journalists working together to create a professional news product. For example, Service Journalism in this Web 2.0 era works in a

collaborative fashion at *The New York Times* where the readers work with journalists to create news as a collective product in the quality of Networked Journalism (Usher, 2012).

Service Journalism talks about grievances and risks, which tend to overlap and blur into one another. Their commutability is something that connects Service Journalism to more collective and political forms of addressing social problems, that characterize the public sphere. Grievances are a kind of complaints where the source of the problem lies in the actions and inactions of others, whereas risks are seen as the means to open new opportunities for growth and gain. Thus, the response of Service Journalism to these problems takes a number of forms, which include advice to seek help and also information about any alternative solutions (Eide and Knight, 1999). By resolving the grievances and the risks, Service Journalism serves the cause of system integration by helping to patch and cover the cracks in social legitimacy and stability that surface in the everyday life.

The role of a Service journalist is predominantly informational, to inform the readers about the behaviours that may be risky in terms of its future consequences and advice about what steps to take to reduce or control this risk. Helping the vulnerable, the underprivileged and the distressed has been an important part of the watchdog role. Through Service Journalism, journalists demonstrate that they are at their audience's service, prepared to contribute to solving everyday issues and directing the pleasures of utilization. They encourage consumer consciousness, arguing that we should stand up for our rights as consumers (Eide, 1999).

Service Journalism crosses the public and private distinction by airing private problems on a public platform. As a genre, Service Journalism can consider as a part of its legacy, the tradition of campaigning that the earlier press undertook, from a variety of political-ideological points of view, in the cause of social justice and moral reform (Eide and Knight, 1999).

CITIZEN JOURNALISM

Service Journalism helps the local marginalized sections of the population to solve their problems whereas Citizen Journalism gives them a platform to help themselves by expressing their own problems and most importantly with the power of their own voice. The power to govern the public sphere no longer belongs entirely to the media. (Nguyen, 2006). Technology, computers, social media and the Internet have facilitated an inevitable media shift that has changed the way the news is gathered, the most important reason being Citizen Journalism (Singer, 2004). There is participatory news (Singer and Kelly, 2009) and participatory journalism where the users or citizens take an active part in the news gathering process and help professional journalists to distribute content. (Channel, 2010). According to Channel (2010) users create their content but the media organizations provide a platform to publish it. Participatory journalism is also referred to as Citizen Journalism.

Citizen Journalism is an act carried on by non professional journalists, who play an active role in collecting, reporting, analyzing and disseminating news and information (Bowman and Willis, 2003). It is a merge of public participation bloggers who break news on Internet sites, and citizens who capture newsworthy events with their mobile phone cameras. Social media such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube allow them to share it (Van Dijck, 2009). Hence, the power of technology has given ordinary citizens the power to become journalists and be a part of a new genre of journalism. Citizen journalists are basically the audiences or the readers who want to contribute to the concerns of the society and share it with the world (Baase, 2008).

Various scholars, (Nguyen, 2006; Gillmor, 2006; Rosen, 2006; Banda, 2010) view the concept of Citizen Journalism differently. Dan Gillmor (2004) was one of the earliest proponents of Citizen Journalism. He defines the concept as 'journalism by the people, for the people' made possible by technologies such as emails, chat rooms, blogs, SMS and mobile phone cameras. These new channels of communication have enabled swift responses from the users, who are the audiences.

According to Shayne Bowman and Chris Willis (2003), the intent of this public participation is to provide independent, reliable, accurate, wide-ranging and relevant information that a democracy requires. Participatory Journalism, Open source Journalism (Bentley, 2005), Grassroots Journalism and user-generated content are some of the terms used to describe Citizen Journalism (Gillmor, 2004; Schweiger and Quiring, 2005; Littau, 2007). According to Kelly (2009), participatory journalism or user generated content means non journalists doing what only professional journalists used to do- witnessing, capturing, reporting, writing and disseminating. Banda (2010) refers to citizen journalists as freelancing individuals, who should be referred to as accidental journalists, who use a cellphone camera, for example to photograph an incident and then upload it on Facebook or any other social media networking site. He further categorizes this as non-institutional. This echoes James Hamilton's (2000) argument that such practices constitute de-professionalization. But Banda (2010), also makes reference to the institutional type in which media institutions seem to be moving into a space created by non-institutional citizen journalists. This wave of technological change is inevitably forcing mainstream media to accept Citizen Journalism for example CNN iReport documented by Amani Channel. Jay Rosen (2008), refers to Citizen Journalism as, the audience applying the press tools they have in their possession to inform one another. As mentioned earlier, the audience is now sharing the same platform, that of a public sphere, with the media. This trend in journalism is one of the challenges faced by media organizations, which needs to find a balance in accepting new forms of conveying information to the audiences while also maintaining the traditional roles, such as gatekeeping (Rosen, 2008).

Citizen Journalism did not exist before the Internet. Technological development has given birth to this new form of journalism and it goes hand in hand with social networking sites. These social media networking websites give the citizen journalists a platform to express their opinions. This means that social media create the conversational bridge between the reporter and reader, which makes a two-way form of communication possible (Sturgies, 2012). Speed is an important characteristic of Citizen Journalism. Smartphone cameras help them to cover various situations

and an immediate upload on all the social media platforms. As a result, Citizen Journalism is almost everywhere and is delivered with great speed (Kelleher, 2012). Citizen Journalism allows the members of the public to engage in agenda setting not merely by producing original content but also by rendering the agenda setting processes of established professional media outlets radically provisional, malleable and susceptible to critical intervention (Goode, 2009). Citizen Journalism is growing yet it is still an underdeveloped, field of research.

According to Channel (2010), users take an active part in gathering the news, and work with professional journalists to distribute the content. The users create the content independently, but the news organizations provide them with a platform. This is contrary to Bruns (2005), who focuses on how the conflict between the media establishments and the new generation of citizen journalists flares up from time to time. Studies show that the mainstream media has adopted the practises of Citizen Journalism (Hermida and Thurman, 2008) where the users of the information contribute to the news on social media. However, Nguyen (2006), is right to argue that the media does not own the solitary power to govern the public sphere given the fact that participatory media production can be thought of as providing the constituents of an alternative public sphere. The available channels are easily accessible through the Internet and this enables individuals to network and contribute through emails and social networking sites. There are some news stories that have been reported by citizen journalists, which are carried by the mainstream media. This is that unavoidable media shift which is compelling the media organizations to accept the user-generated content.

Citizen Journalism allows the voice of the community in the news gathering process (Nip, 2006). According to Witt (2004), within the public journalism model, public involvement and discussion allows individuals in the community to directly influence and benefit the news coverage. Scaffer (2006) observed that Citizen Journalism was emerging as a form of 'bridge' media that links the traditional forms of journalism to civic participation. His argument is that citizen journalists are occupying the civic spaces where the professional journalists could only shift. As per a web

survey, 98 per cent of the participants stated that the emergence of local news websites with the content built from community members was good even though it was different from professional journalism and the content published in established newspapers.

Schultz and Sheffer (2009) argued that media outlets have conceded almost the total control of the content and the distribution process to citizen journalists who are more motivated to change public opinion than traditional journalists. A survey shows what impact the citizen journalists have on traditional news values, such as balanced reporting, confirming the facts and ethical reporting.

Citizen Journalism is definitely rising and it is helping people to raise their voice and address various social issues. It has revolutionized the entire media industry in different parts of the world. Citizen Journalism is also influencing and making an impact on the mainstream media. It has become a powerful tool for every citizen to report the news which touches their lives (Mishra and Krishnaswami, 2015). Also, Citizen Journalism is helping to bring out crucial issues to the mainstream media for discussions and debates and hence it is regarded as a powerful force. According to Mishra and Krishnaswami (2015, p. 55), "The rise of Citizen Journalism is linked to the notion of active citizenship and the need to strengthen democratic governance".

CHAPTER 3

CGNET SWARA IN CHHATTISGARH

GEOGRAPHY, POLITICS AND MEDIA IN CHHATTISGARH STATE

Chhattisgarh, a small part of India with a big role for democracy

Chhattisgarh is a remote tribal dominated land, with rich heritage and culture with 42 tribunal communities. It is a resource rich state inhabited by India's culturally distinct and socio-economically marginalized indigenous communities, known as Adivasis. The area is home to some of the world's richest reserves of coal and iron ore (Agrawal, 2013). Before becoming an independent state in November 2000, for governance and administration purposes, it was a part of Madhya Pradesh, another state of India. Being the 26th Constituted State of India, it still has low population density compared to a geographic scale. Out of the states' 25 million inhabitants, 80% live in the rural areas and 30% are illiterate (Mudliar, Donner, and Thies, 2013). Such low population for the 17th biggest state in India was due to lack of social development, infrastructure, poverty and digital accessibility. It can be given as a prime example of concentrated development in cities rather than villages or rural areas which consist 80% of the biggest democracy in the world (Mudliar, Donner, and Thies, 2013). However, even after these challenges and diversity, it is considered to be the fastest growing state in India. Chhattisgarh is also home to the Maoist insurgency, a violent left wing movement (Mudliar, Donner, and Thies, 2013). It is a tribal state of India with extremely low rates of literacy, a very low media penetration and a violent conflict between the state and the Maoists (Agrawal, 2013).

The majority of the state's population is tribal communities like Gonds, Kowa, Oraon, Bharta, Kharia, to name a few. India has great diversity with different religions, symphonic music and astounding arts and craft. Every culture in India has its unique representation when it comes to rituals and traditions, Chhattisgarh is blessed with strong natural resources, so we can see those elements are used in their daily life very evidently from ornaments to traditional clothing, that

they have found their way to utilize maximum from the available sources. Hindi is the national language but every region has its own local language, Chhattisgarh has 93 dialects which are spoken in the state, and Gondi is one of them. Adding to their own twist and inputs in the local language, Chhattisgarhi is the local dialect. Even though it is one of the fastest developing states, Chhattisgarh is still keeping alive, its heritage and traditions even in the 21st century. It is home to one of the oldest tribes in India, the Gond tribe, which retains a traditional lifestyle of fishing, agriculture and hunting. The urban infrastructure is not highly developed and this has hampered the literacy numbers in the state. Facilities such as access to clean drinking water, basic health care and electricity are next to non-existent in these tribal villages (Harriet, 2015).

Politics in Chhattisgarh

The combined efforts of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Indian National Congress, lead to the formation of a new state of Chhattisgarh. The Indian National Congress, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) have a significant presence in the politics of Chhattisgarh. Chhattisgarh has a unicameral legislature, where the Governor is the ceremonial head of the state. Although, the Governor enjoys a prestigious position, the real power is in the hands of the Chief Minister and his Cabinet.

The Gondwana Party is providing political representation for the local tribal people residing in the rural parts of Chhattisgarh. The Party tries to solve the issues that are faced by the native people of Chhattisgarh. However, the Indian National Congress and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) are the most authoritative political parties in Chhattisgarh, as these parties have had national level representation for quite a while, and they have been historic in the formation of Indian democracy. The cultural, historical and archeological glory of Chhattisgarh is exceptional, but it is still considered a backward state because of the Maoist violence (Singh, 2016). The Maoist is the Communist Party of India that aims to dethrone the Government of India. The struggle for

Chhattisgarh starts within itself, as the Naxalites, the members of the Communist party, who don't follow the philosophies with the government and there have been ongoing conflicts.

The Naxalites dominate the Chhattisgarh Government and hence in the southern and the northern parts of Chhattisgarh, the Naxalites are running parallel governments. There is a constant struggle between the Naxalites and the State Government of Chhattisgarh. With the violent operations of Naxalites, many civilians and police officers have been killed in recent years and these political struggles have hindered the development of the state.

Media in Chhattisgarh

Media in India enjoy power, freedom and immense reach. It has been looked upon to give unbiased coverage around the country and in the last few decades, advancements in technology have revolutionized the world of communications. The majority of the population lives in rural areas where the literacy level is low. The irony is some media organizations are interested in the life of Bollywood Stars rather that concentrating on the most important issues related to the country. With the Internet making an entry, the impact of social media is huge in India. In metropolitan cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Bangalore and Chennai, online media is on a rise whereas in other not-so-developed cities, old school journalism exists in a majority. When any important news breaks, it is first uploaded on social media websites such as Twitter and Facebook, then on television news channels and in newspapers the next day. For instance, Mumbai Police tweets on Twitter to address any important issue that will keep the Mumbaikars (people living in Mumbai) safe. Particularly in the last two decades, India media has evolved greatly. On a positive note, the Indian media is heading in the right direction. In Chhattisgarh, CGNet Swara emerges as a response to an Indian media culture that marginalizes the voices of the tribal communities.

In a developing state like Chhattisgarh, print media still plays a very important role given easy availability and low cost. The older generation might be uneducated and illiterate, but they find a

common newsreader among the youth, who will keep them up updated with the latest happenings of their surrounding from the newspapers. India's newspaper market is fragmented, which is reflecting the country's regional and linguistic diversity. The two most read papers in India are both Hindi dailies - *Dainik Jagran* and *Dainik Bhaskar* (Sharma, 2013). Hindi newspapers are growing fast by launching new localized editions. Chhattisgarh has a large Hindi speaking population. It is a part of the expanding empire of the Hindi press, however there is no major publishing in Adivasi languages yet (Sharma, 2013). However, Hindi newspapers in states like Chhattisgarh depend mostly on government advertising. Not only does the state government contribute nearly half the advertising spend in the state, but it also pays regional channels for favourable coverage by sponsoring news and programmes without any apparent discovery (Sharma, 2013). In Chhattisgarh, the English language national newspapers have a very limited reach, 20,000 readers of *The Times of India* and 5000 readers of *The Hindu* (Sharma, 2013). From six daily newspapers since it became a state, Chhattisgarh now has around twenty-eight local newspapers (Manecksha, 2011). Businessmen or contractors own most of the print media, which shows that the media there has a strong corporate control (Manecksha, 2011).

The Bastar district in Chhattisgarh, which mainly includes tribal population, has witnessed Maoist violence but the national mainstream media have remained silent on all the issues including rapes, encounters of tribal people and false cases due to the violence and insecurity surrounding these kind of news (Dutta, 2016). The main purpose of the attacks related to any kind of terror or Maoists activities is to seek attention from the mainstream media. The Maoists have been kidnapping high profile dignitaries including Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers, collectors and students to make their presence felt across the media and around the country. Maoists in the south of Chhattisgarh get more media attention than the resource conflict in the north of the state, manifested in non-violent protests against mining and industry (Sharma, 2013). Rarely do the needs of the tribal people from these areas make news in India's mainstream newspapers or news channels. For digital media to broadcast anything from the rural and tribunal

parts of Chhattisgarh is more challenging, than covering a small story from a well-developed city. Hence, even if their demands and issues are having more impact on their daily life, it is not represented sufficiently.

The tribal people cannot afford a television, can't read newspapers, have no Internet and above all not much power supply to run the electronics. Hence, there are no TV channels, radio or publications which can deliver news in their local language, which makes it difficult for the tribal people to get any information about what is happening around the country. The literacy rate in tribal parts of Chhattisgarh is low, with only quarter of the population having basic knowledge on how to read and write. According to the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), India has 78 telephone connections for every 100 people. Although in the rural areas, there are about 20 telephone connections for 100 people, it has a greater density than the Internet penetration- only 7.5 people out of 100 use Internet in India. In Chhattisgarh, only 5 people out of 1000 people have access to the Internet (Farooque, 2013).

The tribal life is very isolated and remote, due to lack of infrastructure and absence of digital technology around these parts. Their main obstacle is they do not speak Hindi or English, in which all the mainstream news media operates, be it journalism or information or this digital world. According to the last census, in Chhattisgarh, Gondi is spoken by 2.7 million people. But in Gondi language, there are neither any newspapers, nor any magazines nor any radio news bulletins. Hence, the communication with the outside world becomes zero (Ray, 2010). Additionally, the tribal communities have a minimal voice to publicly express their concerns and they can only communicate in their own tribal language. The overall news coverage given to the issues faced by the tribal people is extremely low. Language barrier is another main issue, which hinders the communication process (Saha, 2012). All the mainstream news channels, newspapers and radio are in English, Hindi or regional languages whereas Gondi and other tribal dialects are the only voices of the rural people. Furthermore, there are hardly any tribal journalists and very few primary journalists who understand Gondi or other tribal languages. This fortification of

language may lead to half-truths or twisting of facts which changes the news story as well as the news values.

Another obstacle is that the tribal people have less interest in knowing about the issues concerning the civil society, considering lack of education and no connectivity with the outside world. However, they do not know the impact that the media can create, resulting in giving them the required attention and helping them solve their difficulties. Due to the unstable conditions in the rural areas, even the journalists hesitate to cover the news in those parts. There have been cases in the past where the journalists have been threatened and sometimes beaten up by the Maoists. There are some journalists who work hard and try to report the reality, but they face pressure from both sides, the police and the Maoists. They mostly don't receive any salary, whatever they get is the commission on advertisements they bring in, which is again dependent on local businessmen and Government officials (Manecksha, 2011). In addition, the main reason why there isn't any economical addressing of the state is because of uneducated middle class Adivasis, who make it difficult for the civil society to consider crucial issues affecting the tribal people.

BACKGROUND, OPERATIONS AND IMPACT OF CGNET SWARA

What is CGNet Swara?

The social, economic and political problems in Chhattisgarh gave rise to CGNet Swara. For the tribal people to have their own voice, Shubhranshu Choudhary introduced CGNet Swara. Revolutionary at its time, it was a unique attempt to make sure that the tribal people are getting a voice of their own to address their own issues. CGNet Swara is a mobile based Indian voice portal and a news service, which enables the tribals of Chhattisgarh to tell their version of stories and most importantly, in the language they speak. In other words, it uses mobile technology to encourage citizen journalism among Central India's Adivasi population. CGNet Swara is basically news generated by the people, for the people. Basically, it works as a ground level reporter where accessibility of journalism has been an issue. The main aim of CGNet Swara is giving a platform to the rural people of India- the non-English speaking majority of the country, to use the power of user-generated content and to strengthen their voice. People residing in the Gondwana region of Chhattisgarh use this portal to share local news as well as problems faced by them.

In 2004, Former BBC journalist, Shubhranshu Choudhary came up with CGNet. It was started as a web forum by a group of people. The main aim of CGNet was to exchange and discuss what was happening in and around Chhattisgarh region. It was a forum for bringing issues like development and governance to mainstream discussion and expose stories (Agrawal, 2013). However, the group soon realized that a large section of the population fell out of the domain of the discussion forum. The obstacle was low level Internet penetration in Chhattisgarh, at less than 1% of the population (Agrawal, 2013). The CGNet group understood that in villages there are only few television sets and no distribution of newspapers. Hence, the medium of participation should be voice-based, which will allow universal access and build on the Adivasi tradition of oral expression (Agrawal, 2013). The rapid penetration of mobile phones in low-income regions

of countries like India has triggered widespread interest in building mobile systems and applications for the benefit of education, health, governance, and other social ends and Chhattisgarh is no exception (Agrawal, 2013).

In February 2010, the forum took the shape of CGNet Swara. He developed this voice-based portal with Microsoft Research India. Arjun Venkatraman left an IT job in Silicon Valley to join as a tech backbone of the operation. They made sure that the name stands out and hence, 'C G' stands for 'Central Gondwana' and 'Swara' means 'Voice' in Sanskrit language (Smith, 2014). It is based on an Audiowiki software developed by Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) (Ghosh, 2014). It is a simple process with an ordinary calling system. From a mobile phone, the caller can give a missed call on 91-8050068000 (Acharya, 2013). This call then goes through the CGNet Swara call-center. The Interactive Voice Response (IVR) is then activated and the call is returned in a minute or so. Then, two options are given to the callers- press 1 to record a message or press 2 to listen to previous messages (up to 4). (Acharya, 2013). This recorded message then goes through an editorial process and it verified and edited by trained journalists and volunteers to avoid any propaganda or false claims (Farooque, 2013).

The recorded messages are then available for playback on the CGNet Swara website and over the phone, accompanied by the phone number of the relevant person who is responsible for dealing with the issue (Harriet, 2015). Also, in the approved news reports, transcripts and summaries of the stories are provided and translated into local tribal languages (Townsend, 2011). The reports are also posted online on the CGNet Swara website with English and Hindi translations to increase its reach (Hairsine, 2016). The moderators of CGNet Swara use a Google SMS channel to send out an SMS after every news report is published (Rezwan, 2012). The messages are also shared on their Facebook and Twitter accounts and other social media platforms (Smith, 2014). They are also sent out to the CGNet mailing list. Also, the staff of CGNet Swara tries their best to circulate the news received to their contacts in the mainstream media.

To make the service affordable for the tribal people, the service is currently free. As this portal hasn't reached a revenue-generating phase, Choudhary currently manages the project with the help of grants from the United Nations Democracy Fund and also receives funding from Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (Ghosh, 2014).

For a service that was started in an area which has many issues regarding connectivity and digital reach, in the first 34 months of its formation, CGNet Swara received an astounding 140,000 calls, which was a great number (Mudliar, Donner, and Thies, 2013).

Evolution of CGNet Swara

Shubhranshu Choudhary was the South Asia Producer for BBC TV and Radio and was covering wars and natural disasters then (Smith, 2014). He was captivated by the problems his region faced and hence decided to quit the BBC and return to Chhattisgarh, hoping to solve the problems of the tribal people including the influence of the Maoists.

A huge percentage of the population in Chhattisgarh is illiterate and only 0.5 percent have Internet access (Mudliar, Donner, and Thies, 2013). The reach of traditional media outlets in rural and Adivasi communities is limited, education is poor, language is a barrier; so he knew he wanted to do come up with something with was simple, low cost and democratic- not run by outsiders with vested interests, but by locals themselves. He knew that the local people will know the right picture of the situation and the problems among the locals. By having citizen journalists report local news in an audio format rather than a text format, was more fruitful for a bigger reach enabling him to share it with a larger scale media as transferring audio files is easier and more impactful than the text format.

The most important thing, which helped CGNet Swara to expand its range, was the boom of mobile phones which was going on in the early 2000s. Today there is 60% penetration of mobile phones in the tribal areas (Choudhary, 2010, p.2). Hence, Choudhary began exploring the idea of using mobile phones as a media platform for the tribal communities. Choudhary and Frederick

Noronha set up CGNet in 2004. It was considered a people's platform and every member of the village was a journalist giving the rural people the talent and opportunities to showcase themselves. CGNet has 2,500 members who examine various issues related to Chhattisgarh. The CGNet website and mailing list are a platform for discussion for the people of Chhattisgarh, which are still active and receive more than 230 messages a month (Mudliar, Donner, and Thies, 2013).

In 2008, Choudhary met Bill Thies at a mobile technology conference in Bangalore (Chowdhary, 2013, p.2). Thies secured a PhD from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Computer Science. He was working as a researcher with the Technologies for Emerging Markets Group with Microsoft Research India (Smith, 2014). He was working on a project 'Audiowiki' which is a user-generated platform for publishing audio content to a larger audience (Ghosh, 2014). This proved to be an ideal starting point for building a mobile phone-based news platform. A software package with 10 voice lines that automatically calls the caller back and records the message was developed by Thies and his team. This gave shape to CGNet Swara in February 2010. CGNet Swara is a portal to CGNet, which uses mobile phones to send across a message beyond the reach of the Internet. Initially, CGNet Swara project was limited to the state of Chhattisgarh but later it spread across Gondwana, and other parts of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh (Farooquee, 2013).

The reports are mostly in Gondi language and some in Hindi and English. Around 1000 to 1500 callers listen to the messages recorded on the website every day and on an average 500 calls are recorded every day (Tinsley, 2013).

Founder of CGNet Swara

Choudhary's parents came from Bangladesh and settled in a small town in Koriya district of Chhattisgarh. His father was working with the Railways in the tribal areas. Choudhary went to a school where his classmates were all Adivasis (Singh, 2016). He grew up with the tribal people in a tribal region and so he knew the exact condition of what happens there.

After completing school, he went on to study Engineering but dropped out in the first year. He was more interested in reading and then became a journalist. As his first job, he was reporting for a local Hindi language newspaper in Raipur, the capital of Chhattisgarh. He learnt English language by listening to the BBC radio at night (Smith, 2014).

He worked with the BBC during the 1990s and early 2000s. He spent most of his time covering natural disasters and wars around the region. He had to travel from one troubled area to another- Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Kashmir and Nepal- interviewing politicians, local people and NGO representatives (Smith, 2014).

Maoists had killed 76 Indian police officers in a trap, which had started making headlines. Choudhary then went to Chhattisgarh with his BBC crew to report the happenings. The situation was different for him this time because he knew most of the Maoists, who were his classmates and hence he could communicate with them on a personal level. There was a real need for a democratic media because people were frustrated of their voices being unheard. In Chhattisgarh, there were neither tribal journalists, nor any journalist who could understand the tribal language and only a small minority of their community could speak Hindi (Choudhary, 2010, p.1).

Choudhary was intrigued by the conflicts and problems faced by the tribals and hence decided to leave BBC and returned to Chhattisgarh. With a Knight International Journalism Fellowship, he began to study the problem of the villagers of Chhattisgarh, the voice they were willing to fight for (Smith, 2014). He wanted to reach into the remotest areas of the state and raise issues in their local language, Gondi and yet reach the ears of the outside world (Smith, 2014). Initially, he struggled to establish a two way dialogue with tribal inhabitants of Central India, he then realized

a voice based platform would be the key, given the low literacy rate and negligible Internet penetration in that region (Farooquee, 2013).

Choudhary (2015, p. 2) says, "If we want to live in a peaceful society, it is not enough for our elections to be democratic. We need the media to be democratic as well, so that everybody have a say in deciding what issues are going to be discussed, not just a few wealthy media proprietors and their chosen editors."

Radio is widely listened to in India and hence he first looked at the Community Radio to be the quintessential solution, but it is strictly controlled by the Government (Smith, 2014). Moreover, it is in Hindi, and the tribal people do not understand that language. He was looking for a communication system that would solve the issues of the tribal people. One of the problem was the language barrier, second was the distance, as these communities live in far off places and the third one was illiteracy and no electricity at homes. Hence, he was looking for a journalistic solution which the help of technology (Choudhary, 2010, p.2). The only thing with which the tribals are connected with the outside world are the mobile phones. Mobile phones have created a lot of impact in Chhattisgarh and also the tribal areas. That's when Choudhary started exploring the idea of using mobile phones. When he came up with CGNet in 2004, which is an e-discussion forum, where anyone with an Internet access can write about their issues. But the real issue was, it needed Internet to discuss their problems and very few people had Internet access (Singh, 2013).

Currently, Choudhary and his team are training people to become community moderators and reporters. He received a Google Digital Activism Award in 2014 regarded as a token for his success of CGNet Swara (Smith, 2014). Choudhary has won the Index on Censorship's 2014 Freedom of Expression Award (Townson, 2014). In 2010, CGNet Swara won the mbillionth Award in the m-news category (Ghosh, 2014). It recognizes the organizations, which use mobile phones to deliver important services to the people who live in remote villages.

CGNet Swara Team

In an abandoned mushroom farm, full of shrubs around, on the outskirts of Bhopal, lies the CGNet Swara office (Farooque, 2013). Hackergram is a news hub and a tech lab for CGNet Swara news service (Tinsley, 2013). Because the team was looking for the best possible available resources, their operation lab was moved to the outskirts of Bhopal. There are a few advantages of operating on a former farm such as there is space to tackle the further development of CGNet Swara's mobile platform, to train citizen journalists and to build a community radio network (Tinsley, 2013). The team members are mostly local, most of them are the villagers themselves, they speak the local language and understand the complexities of the local village cultures (Harriet, 2015). A small group of trained journalists work part time and full time and volunteers, along with Arjun Venkatraman, who handles technical operations of the project (Rees, 2013). To ensure the journalistic integrity of the service, a large portion of the team is made up of trained journalists, who fact check each and every field report once it has been recorded in the system (Rees, 2013). For their work to run smoothly, they have an open source software and a proper Internet connection. In the office, is a server developed by MIT, which records the calls made to CGNet Swara (Farooque, 2013). The staff has morning phone call discussions with Choudhary, who enquires about follow-ups, pending messages and updates. Choudhary and his team are the first to develop a website with Gondi script. Choudhary trains his trainers to move around and teach rural citizens basic journalistic reporting skills, to achieve his goal- to make tribal people, reporters of their respective areas. He also hosts training workshops to provide people with necessary skills to produce short reports with their mobile phones (Townson, 2014). By improving with technology and training people on how to use the service, Choudhary, his team and the community are levelling the media playing field and also providing a news source to people who fall off mainstream media's radar (Rees, 2013).

Content of posts on CGNet Swara

The content of posts on CGNet Swara are quite distinct. Most of the posts on the CGNet Swara website are grievances, where the tribal people talk about problems faced by them. However, a regular amount of posts are full of stories, poems and songs sung by individuals in their tribal language, which are rich in cultural tradition (Mudliar, Donner, and Thies, 2013). These messages have a social meaning. Posts under this 'Entertainment' category are in many different languages- Hindi, Chhattisgarhi, Gondi, Kurukh, Nagpuri, Santhali, Bhilali, some tribal languages of Chhattisgarh (Saha, 2012). Another category of posts is live reports and news bulletins, mostly the happenings around the region, which includes the coverage or reports on conventions, fairs and public rallies (Saha, 2012). 85% of the posts are in Hindi language and 10% are in Kurukh language and the rest are in other tribal languages. Some of the posts are translated by the CGNet Swara team for people who are not familiar with Hindi and tribal languages to read. Also, the CGNet Swara team aspires to seek more content in tribal languages (Mudliar, Donner, and Thies, 2013). In short, CGNet Swara deals with news, personal news, songs and other cultural information.

Impact of CGNet Swara

The biggest impact of CGNet Swara is successfully giving voice to the tribal people of Chhattisgarh. Having a voice and feeling heard is what Choudhary gave to the tribals of rural Chhattisgarh, in the form of CGNet Swara. Many of the CGNet Swara's posts originate from the unheard and the powerless sections of the society, the remote and the tribal areas with low levels of literacy (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015). Choudhary's vision is to fix the communication gap between the tribal and the non-tribal community. The network has evolved from merely being a discussion forum to a space for Citizen Journalism and also a place to highlight one's problems (Farooque, 2013). In areas where a women cannot give her opinion, CGNet Swara has helped women to put their voice across. It takes up issues that no newspaper or

radio will take up (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015). Coming from the communities that often face neglect, the CGNet Swara contributors love having the freedom of choosing their own topics and relate to them in their own voice. On CGNet Swara, they can pick issues relevant to themselves without caring if they interest the mainstream media or not (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015). At an individual level, the CGNet Swara contributors value that posting requires neither high levels of literacy nor any skilled articulation. Besides, the posts are recorded just as they like to talk, without any changes (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015).

From the time it went live, the service has attributed a lot of achievements, for the Gondi speaking tribals of Chhattisgarh. The portability of the mobile phone led to the creation of CGNet Swara. Participants act as citizen journalists or infomediaries, generating and sharing content with one another (Mudliar, Donner, and Thies, 2013). Since 2004, when CGNet was established, there was an effective change within the state. There are more than 2000 members in the CGNet mailing list, since July 2011 (Mudliar, Donner, and Thies, 2013). Until 31st December 2011, CGNet Swara has published around 1,174 reports and the network recorded 140,000 calls between 2010 and 2013. Also, around 147 non-anonymous citizen journalists have contributed their stories for CGNet Swara (Mudliar, Donner, and Thies, 2013).

Apart with the grievances, there is an artistic and a cultural touch to CGNet Swara. It not only solves issues but encourages the tribal people to record their own songs and poems. It also gives them a platform to showcase their talent. Being heard by a large audience is a big motivation for them. Hence, CGNet Swara can also be served as a medium of entertainment (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015). Choudhary is constantly trying to create new channels in local languages for CGNet Swara, also developing technology to connect citizen band radios and building a division of citizen journalists (Tinsley, 2013).

Personal development can also be considered as an impact. For the contributors, CGNet Swara has personal benefits. It gives them the satisfaction of having been instrumental in change and a

sense of achievement in helping the less fortunate than themselves (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015).

Choudhary is planning to launch another phone based platform, Swasthya Swara or Health voice, which will try to address questions regarding health in the rural areas by mobilizing traditional herbal healers of Central India (Farooque, 2013). Swasthya Swara gathers local traditional healers for consultation on the mobile phone system and it is funded by non-Adivasi callers, who are able to pay. Thus, for example, a caller from Bangalore can now pay for a consultation with a herbal practitioner and thus cross subsidise others who cannot pay (Acharya, 2013).

CHAPTER 4
METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION:

This chapter engages with the methodological considerations of primary data gathering. To capture the effectiveness of CGNet Swara, a qualitative approach was selected to best contribute to a deeper understanding of this portal. Methodology can be defined as a philosophically coherent collection of theories, concepts, or ideas as they relate to a particular discipline or field of inquiry (Nair, 2010, pg.8). Data in research means investigating facts further in detail, which makes it an integral part of the research process.

The main aim of this study matches the qualitative approach to data gathering and undertaking the analysis. This part of the chapter discusses the evidence gathering methods and techniques, in order to ensure consistency, high quality responses and ethical procedure. The data collection techniques allow the researcher to systematically gather the information about the object of their study (Sani, 2013, pg. 40). There are many different types of collecting the data, which are divided into Quantitative and Qualitative methods. However, in this study, we will be only looking at the qualitative approach of data gathering. There are various types of qualitative data collection methods such as surveys or questionnaires, focus groups, case studies and interviews. To gain more information of CGNet Swara, the data collection techniques which I will be considering are analysing the case studies and talk about the newsworthiness and language of the news stories and the posts.

Case studies: A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident (Merriam, 1998, pg. 27). Case studies are adapted for exploring new processes or behaviours that are not fully understood (Hartley, 1994). Hence, this approach is mostly useful for responding to the how and why questions about a contemporary state of events (Leonard-Barton, 1990). An advantage of a case study is the opportunity for a comprehensive view of the process. The detailed observations entailed in the case study method enable us to study many different aspects and examine them in relation to one another (Meyer, 2001, pg. 330).

The most defining characteristic of case study research is determining the object of the study, i.e the case. The case is a thing, a solitary entity, or a unit, which has limits. Hence, the case can be a person or a group such as a community, a school, an organization and so on. The study gives the researcher a chance to identify the factors or the phenomenon, which is to be considered. Also, this method gives the researcher an ability to deal with a wide spectrum of evidence (Kuthiala, 2010, pg. 11).

Qualitative case studies can be characterized as particularistic, descriptive and heuristic, which are explained below.

Particularistic: In these type of case studies, the focus is on a particular situation, event or a phenomenon (Merriam, 1998). The case is important as it reveals information about the phenomenon and what it might represent. A particularistic case study can suggest to a reader what to do and what not to do and it can examine a particular situation but illustrate a general problem.

Descriptive: It means the end product of the case study is a rich, in depth description of a phenomenon under study (Merriam, 1998). Case studies include many variables and portray their interaction over a period of time. Instead of reporting case studies in a numerical data, descriptive case studies use prose and literary techniques to describe the situations (Wilson, 1979, pg. 448).

These case studies illustrate the complexities of a situation. Also they present information in variety of ways, from different viewpoints of the groups.

Heuristic: These type of case studies illustrate the reader's understanding of the phenomenon. They can bring about a discovery of a new meaning and extend the reader's experience, or confirm what is already known (Merriam, 1998). It explains why an innovation worked or failed to work. Heuristic case studies discuss and explain the alternatives, which are not chosen (Olson, 1982).

Strengths and limitations: Like any research method, case studies have some strengths and limitations. A researcher selects a case study design because of the nature of the research problem and the questions being asked (Merriam, 1998). Anchored in real life situations, the case studies result in a rich and holistic account of a phenomenon. Case studies have been proven to be particularly useful for studying educational innovations, for evaluating programs and for informing policy (Merriam, 1998). They understand humans and as they engage in action and interaction within the context of the situations and settings. Case studies are better in accessing social change (Collins and Noblit, 1978). Case studies offer an opportunity for a researcher to use a range of tools on one subject, which gives time and space to understand the topic better. Although rich, in depth description and analysis of a phenomenon may be desired, a researcher may not have time or money to devote to such an undertaking (Merriam, 1998). Case studies can sometimes oversimplify or exaggerate a situation, leading to inaccurate conclusions (Guba and Lincoln, 1981). Moreover, the readers might think that case studies are an account of the whole, whereas they might be just a part of it.

Newsworthiness: News is an account or a report of the events taking place. It is a form of communication with the outside world. News is always defined through its relevance to its audience or readership. It is also about social deviance, where there are some specific norms attached to it. The idea of deviance refers broadly to the fact that journalism tracks and evaluates 'where things go wrong' in a society from governmental corruption through to minor acts of vandalism, for example. Recognizing if an event has news value or is newsworthy is extremely important. News values provide a moral and political framework of what is acceptable for a society. Due to the increasing flow of the digital information in today's society, it makes it difficult for the journalists to manage and analyze data in terms of its newsworthiness. News is a social construct and newsworthiness is an intellectual construct and a psychological judgement. Newsworthiness is just one of an immense range of factors that impact what turns into the news and how prominently events are covered (Shoemaker, 2006). The concept of newsworthiness is based on the presumption that specific events get chosen by the media above others in light of the qualities or 'news values' they possess (Nies, D'Heer, Coppens, Deursen, Mannens, Paulussen and Walle, n.d). The more of these news values are fulfilled; it is more likely that an event will be considered. Henceforth, the journalists' criteria for choosing the news are cumulative, making stories remarkable based on their overall level of newsworthiness (Nies, D'Heer, Coppens, Deursen, Mannens, Paulussen and Walle, n.d). Shoemaker and Cohen (2006, p. 337) noted, "News and newsworthiness are theoretically distinct. What people or even journalists think is newsworthy is not necessarily what becomes news." The events need to be known and recognized, coming from a trusted source. To be newsworthy, they should fulfill a certain number of criterias (Hartley, 1982). The earliest attempt for a systematic approach of determining the newsworthiness by news values was made by Galtung and Ruge, which activated them in inspecting the events that make them more inclined to get coverage (Nies, D'Heer, Coppens, Deursen, Mannens, Paulussen and Walle, n.d). The news values discussed by them are:

1. Frequency- The time span of an event to unfold itself. For example, murders take very little time and their meaning is quickly decided. Hence, it fits well with the daily newspapers. However, cultural, economic and social trends take longer to unfold and to be made significant. They are outside the frequency of daily newspapers. Thus, they need to be marked if the get reported (Hartley, 1982, p. 76).

2. Threshold- The impact or the size of an event. There is a certain threshold below which no event will be reported. Once reported, there is further threshold for drama, the bigger the story, more the drama. War is an example of threshold. It is a very big news, and its coverage is very unlikely to increase, unless a terrible event takes place (Hartley, 1982, p. 76).

3. Meaningfulness- This news value can be divided into two parts- cultural proximity and relevance. Cultural proximity- Events in accord with the cultural background of the news-gatherers will be viewed as more important than others, thus more liable to be selected. For example, Islamic, third world and oriental events may not be viewed as meaningful to Western journalists unlike European, American or even Russian events. Secondly, in our culture, events associated with underprivileged or ethnic gatherings, with districts, remote from the centralized bases of news associations, or with working class culture, will be viewed as less meaningful than those related with central, official, literate culture. Relevance- Events in far off cultures, classes or districts will end up newsworthy in the event that they encroach on the news gatherer's home culture - ordinarily as a risk; as with Arab nations with oil - their ways of life, traditions and convictions are all of a sudden intriguing for Western journalists (Hartley, 1982, p. 77).

4. Unexpectedness- Basically, the wow factor in a news story. It is the unpredictability and rarity of an event. Hence, the newness of the unexpected discovered usually gets discovered completely well known and expected contexts.

5. Negativity- A negative factor in a news story. Basically, bad news is actually good news.

6. Human interest- A news story which has a personal or a human-interest value. Events are viewed as the activities of individuals as people. Individual people are easier to identify and to relate with- than structures, forces or establishments

   (Hartley, 1982).

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH:

The main purpose of this qualitative research study is to understand the dynamics of changing journalism in Chhattisgarh. Case studies are an integral part of CGNet Swara and they show how powerful is its impact. The aim of analyzing the case studies is to analyze the multiple stories of the individuals. Discussing the case studies will help in obtaining information from various sources. I was particularly interested in knowing more about these three case studies that represent CGNet Swara very well.

The first case study is of a 20 year old boy Deepak Raj, who was sold for 1.3 lakh rupees as a bonded labour in Gujarat for almost six months before a police team from Madhya Pradesh came and rescued him. Within six days of voice reporting on CGNet Swara, the local government took the action and brought Deepak back home.

(Chowdhry, 2013).

The second case study is of Pitbasu Bhoi whose wages were due. He desperately needed money to provide medical treatment for his son. His first call recording to CGNet Swara described his struggle to receive his wages and the second call recording informed the death of his ill son. This incident was brought to light through a series of reports in India's most widely circulated newspapers- *The Times of India* and *The Hindu*. His wages were delivered within two weeks of the first coverage on CGNet Swara.

(Mudliar, Donner and Thies, 2013).

The third case is of two pregnant women who died in two consecutive months because they couldn't reach the hospital in time because of the lack of proper roads. Someone in the tribe came

to know about CGNet Swara and he called CGNet Swara and recorded a message. Fortunately, someone in New Jersey came across this message on the website of CGNet Swara and called the collector. He reached there with his entire team and studied the condition and requirements. Today, a new road has been built.

(Choudhary, 2017).

The case study method reveals the key themes of Citizen Journalism values in Chhattisgarh. This method gives an in depth understanding of the impact of CGNet Swara and how it has benefited the rural people of Chhattisgarh. Personal experiences explain the excellent work done by CGNet Swara. Hence, I will be focusing on the case study method to study CGNet Swara. News values define the strength of a news story. Hence, to understand the news stories of CGNet Swara, an in depth explanation of newsworthiness is required to analyse it. Therefore, along with the analyzation of case studies, I will be looking at newsworthiness as a research method.

CHAPTER 5

LOCATING JOURNALISM AND GOVERNANCE IN CGNET SWARA

In the first part of the chapter, I will be discussing three CGNet Swara case studies in detail. CGNet Swara has been playing an active role in the lives of the tribal people of Chhattisgarh. The significance of case studies is that they are an in depth investigation of one particular group or an individual (Salmon, 2017). To understand CGNet Swara better, examining a few case studies will prove useful. CGNet Swara is a vast topic, and case studies give a personal and a human touch to understand it better. These case studies talk about how CGNet Swara has been acting as a portal that brings many stories from tribal areas to the forefront and hence, I will be analyzing the case studies in detail. I will be describing the mainstream newspapers, which spoke about CGNet Swara and also look at how the issues were covered by a mainstream news outlet. Then, I will be looking at how the posts were taken up by the mainstream media and talk about them with regard to the concept of news values. Also, I will be talking about the three case studies in regards to Journalism and the Fourth Estate, Development Journalism, Service Journalism, Citizen Journalism. Let us now look at the three case studies published by the mainstream newspapers.

There are two main features of the case studies: On one hand there is evidence of the way that CGNet Swara works to help the people who post on their site but also on the other hand much of the reportage in the news stories and also on the CGNet Swara posts themselves are about promotion for CGNet Swara. For people to get to know about CGNet Swara, this is important for them, as many people hear, those many people will get help.

The first case study is of a 20 year old Deepak Raj, who was sold as a bonded labourer. He worked in a flourmill in Dahod, Gujarat for almost six months before a police team from his village Lohgarh, Madhya Pradesh Rewa district rescued him in April, 2013.

Deepak belongs to the Kol tribe, a tribe of people living in Chhattisgarh. He was sent to Gujarat by his father, who had no clue that his eldest son was actually being sold for 1.80 lakh rupees by the man who promised to find work for him. Deepak's father, Ram Raj (2013, p. 1) said, "I had sent my son with Phool Chand from our village along with other five or six boys. But within two or three months, most of the boys ran away from that mill. Deepak was stuck, he was not fed properly, nor was he given a chance to call us. They changed his name from Deepak to Rama. In the two or three calls, which he managed to make, he cried and begged us to rescue him. I went to our local police station, but they asked for Rs. 5000 to file a complaint. That's when I thought of asking Brijesh Verma for help."

In Lohgarh, Brijesh Verma has been working as a citizen journalist with CGNet Swara. After Brijesh Verma met a trainer Jagdish Yadav, who runs a local NGO known as Panchsheel Seva Sansthaan, near Lohgarh, he too started contributing to CGNet Swara.

Brijesh Verma helped Ram Raj record the story of his son and within six days of the voice report being published on CGNet Swara, the local government swung into action and brought Deepak home (Chowdhry, 2013)

I will be talking about how other media reported the incident and also about the background of the media outlets. *Mint* is an Indian daily newspaper, which is published by Hindustan Times Media, an Indian mass media company. The target audience of *Mint* are the readers who are business executives and policy makers. Although it is a daily newspaper, *Mint* focuses on the bigger stories of the day, along with analysis and lifestyle pieces. It presents business and financial information and often uses infographics to tell stories and present data. The Editorial section of *Mint* broadly supports the economic liberalization and uncontrolled economy. Local news finds it hard to make a mark on mainstream news media. However, this story was picked up by *Mint*. None of the other mainstream news channels or newspapers featured this news story. The news story starts with Deepak Raj's story about how he was sold as a labourer and how citizen journalists and CGNet Swara helped him to get back to his village. For instance, the story

starts in the following way: 'Deepak Raj is 20 years old and has been through a horrific ordeal. Sold as a bonded labourer, he worked in a flour mill in Dahod, Gujarat, for six months before a police team from his village Lohgarh in Madhya Pradesh's Rewa district rescued him in April.' This lead paragraph answers all the 'WH' questions. The article also talks about how CGNet Swara works and how did it evolve. The structure of the story goes from important events in the beginning to less important events at the end. The sources included in the article are Ram Raj, Deepak's father; Brijesh Verma, the citizen journalist and Jagdish Yadav, a local NGO coordinator. Here, CGNet Swara acts as that platform where voice is raised by people and the action takes place immediately. They talk about how when reported on CGNet Swara, that within six days the local government got Deepak home. According to me, *Mint* has reported the story after having a look at the kind of impact CGNet Swara has on people. The story has been discussed in length and all appropriate details of the people, place and money have been spoken in it. For example, the name of all the people, their occupations, the place where the incident took place and the amount for which Deepak was sold, all have been discussed. News values determine the prominence of a news story.

Let us now look at how this news story justifies or does not justify the news values. Events which occur suddenly like these fit well with the newspapers and are more readily reported, which can be considered as 'frequent'. Frequency is the time span needed for a story to unfold itself and acquire meaning. Long-term trends mostly do not receive much coverage. This story of Deepak Raj fits well with the terms of the newspapers. Deepak's story as covered in the newspaper does not meet the 'threshold' of a whole mainstream news media. CGNet Swara is successful because of its posts. The reason why the mainstream media picked up this story is as a resolution and for the action in the story. These kind of stories do not happen everyday, hence it maybe one more reason for the mainstream media to speak about it. However, the target audience is basically the local people and it will be relevant only to the local areas where the incident has happened. As explained by Galtung and Ruge (2001), 'meaningfulness' can be divided into two parts- cultural

proximity and relevance. The CGNet Swara news stories take place with the cultural background of the news-gatherers, which will be regarded as important for the people residing in the tribal areas of Chhattisgarh. It won't be much relevant to the people outside of the Chhattisgarh region. 'Unexpectedness' is basically, a wow factor in a news story. Deepak's story definitely has an element of unexpectedness or surprise. Readers are always interested in news of other people, which brings out 'personalization or a human interest' angle. Stories of affected people create an interesting human-interest angle. This story of Deepak Raj who was sold and his return to his village presents a human-interest value to the news piece

(Galtung and Ruge, 2001).

However, the news on the CGNet Swara website is just a brief summary of what happened with an audio recording. (See Appendix) The transcript of the audio recording is as follows. 'Hello, I am Jagdish Yadav and I am in Lohgarh village in Rewa district in Madhya Pradesh today. Brijesh Verma from Lohgarh had sent a message on Swara about an Adivasi boy Deepak being sold in Gujarat for Rs 1.80 lakhs. His parents had complained to the local police, yet there was no action taken. But, after the CGNet Swara report, Deepak has come back home after a week. Today, I am here in their village and now lets us talk with Brijesh Ji. so Brijesh Ji, what all did you do to help Deepak get out of this? Hello, I am Brijesh Verma from Lohgarh, Madhya Pradesh. Deepak's parents had come to us and also reported in the police station, but even after fifteen days there was no action taken. Then his parents came to me and asked if there is any solution. I told them that I don't any have solution, but CGNet Swara is a channel which can help you out. Then Deepak's parents spoke with CGNet Swara, and within one week, Deepak came back home. So now let us speak with Deepak, who's name was changed to Rama in the company. Deepak, can you tell us how were you kept as a slave and who took you there. Deepak says, "Phool Chand had sold me." Jagdish asks Deepak that how did the police recognize him with his fake name and he says they asked if there is anyone called as Rama. His friend helped the police to draw Deepak's sketch and that's how police found him. "How much food did they give you to eat?" Deepak

says, "They gave me two rotis (Indian flat bread)". "Did you get all your money back?" Deepak says, "Yes, I got all the money back." "In how many lakhs were you sold?" Deepak says, "1.80 lakhs." "And how many months did you have to stay there?" Deepak says, "7 months." Jagdish says that he is in Deepak's village and he couldn't speak with Deepak's parents. Now, I want to ask Brijesh Ji, his views on CGNet Swara and the local officials of the village. Brijesh says that he is extremely thankful to CGNet Swara and its listeners and would like to thank the local officials who helped Deepak get home safely. Deepak is also thankful to CGNet Swara and the officials who got him home'. In the recording, we can hear Jagdish Yadav, Brijesh Verma and Deepak Raj himself explaining the situation and how CGNet Swara helped Deepak to come home safely. Jagdish Yadav and Brijesh Verma don't really introduce themselves but directly start talking about the situation and how everything took place. According to me, this in an emotional description of what had happened and also promotional for CGNet Swara.

The amount to which Deepak Raj was sold is different in *Mint* and on CGNet Swara website. For instance, in the *Mint* story the amount discussed is 1.50 lakhs, whereas on the CGNet Swara website and the audio recording it says 1.80 lakhs. However, Deepak Raj himself says in the audio recording that the amount to which he was sold in 1.80 lakhs, hence this can be confirmed. *Mint* newspaper did more reporting on this story than a small clipping on CGNet Swara website. Because, on the CGNet Swara website, there are many more impactful stories of how CGNet Swara played an active role in helping the tribal communities. The space is restricted there and hence they can't write detailed stories. Moreover, the audio recording explains everything in detail.

The *Mint* story can be considered as a feature story or a newspaper article that has a personal slant and is written in an individualistic style. A feature story is a descriptive story and not any typical news story. This story starts with the journalist talking about Deepak's story and the gradually proceeds to talk about CGNet Swara, how it functions and their team and the workplace. The case study is the hook for the feature story on CGNet Swara. Because of a personal touch, CGNet

Swara stories get reported and are important as well. The language of the story is like any other conventional news story. For example, it starts with a lead paragraph and continues with quotes and follows the structure of an inverted pyramid.

The second case study is of Pitbasu Bhoi, a week after losing his ailing son and ten months after he worked on a village road project finally got his ten thousand rupees he had earned under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA). This scheme guarantees job cardholders hundred days of paid work in a year. Pitbasu Bhoi's story is a moving individual story but it is representative of a broader social problem in Chhattisgarh.

Bhoi (2011, p. 1) said, "What is the use of the money now? I have lost my son. I needed the money to save his life". A manual labourer from Pampapur village in Surguja district, Bhoi worked for hundred days last year building a village road under the NREGA, but it took the government nine months to process his payment (Sethi, 2011).

Bhoi broke his leg three years ago, when a motorcycle knocked him down and since then, he hasn't been able to find regular work as he cannot carry heavy loads (Sethi, 2011).

Bhoi began working in February 2010. According to provisions under the NREGA, the workers should be paid within 15 days of work. But ten months later, in the second week of January, his 22-year-old son Santosh struggled for his life in a hospital, suffering from a serious kidney ailment and Bhoi was still going around to collect his wages.

"My son had been complaining of pain for a few weeks, since we didn't have money, we delayed taking him to the hospital. But when the pain became unbearable, we took him to the hospital, 30 kilometers from Ambikapur town. After admitting him there, I travelled back and forth between the hospital and the panchayat everyday, trying to get my money, " said Pitbasu Bhoi (2011, p. 1). But he did not get his money and five days after being hospitalized, his son Santosh died. "We did not have money to buy four bottles of blood for his transfusion," said Bhoi over the telephone, "It took me around two days to find people who were willing to donate blood. But he died. The hospital asked for seven thousand rupees just to release his body."

A recent study by the Right to Food Campaign notes that delayed payments are the biggest challenge facing the NREGA in Chhattisgarh. While the Act stipulates that all payments should be made within fifteen days of completing work, the study reveals that only three percent of workers in Surguja and four percent of workers in Chhattisgarh received their payments on time. Almost seventy per cent of workers in Chhattisgarh are paid more than a month late (Sethi, 2011). As reports appeared in the local newspapers and BBC Hindi, the local officials visited the village and then the branch of the rural public sector bank handed Bhoi his ten thousand rupees. The article in BBC Hindi talks about how CGNet Swara and the local officials helped Pitbasu to get his wages. Now, some activists are taking the case to the court to get Bhoi compensation, which he is entitled, according to the law (Sethi, 2011). The reports in the local newspapers and BBC Hindi were a direct result of CGNet Swara.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Zilla Parishad, Dhananjay Dewangan (2011, p. 1) said, "The death is unfortunate, however it cannot be connected to the delayed payment of the wages." He claimed that the wages had been released by the organization fourteen days prior, yet couldn't clarify why Bhoi did not get his money from the bank on time

(Sharmal, 2011).

A citizen journalist, Rakesh Rai helped Bhoi to share his story with CGNet Swara, which was later picked up by India's two leading national dailies, The Times of India and The Hindu. Now, Pitbasu Bhoi is a regular contributor to CGNet Swara, despite not owning a cellphone (Saha, 2012). In the above case study, CGNet Swara acted as a channel that amplified the voice of the poor. The story was then picked up by mainstream newspapers, which then forced the authorities to take action (Saha, 2012). When a mainstream media channel picks up a story, the media takes it to that level where you are forced to act on those actions. Mainstream media has a strong voice, which helps in solving issues. Hence, the local officials started working on Pitbasu's case and gave him his earned money.

I will be talking about how other media reported the incident and also about the background of the media outlets. One of the oldest newspapers, *The Times of India* is a daily newspaper and the fourth largest newspaper by circulation and the largest selling English language daily in the world. It is also the most famous and widely read newspaper in India. *The Hindu* is an Indian daily newspaper and the second most circulated English language newspaper, after *The Times of India*. BBC World Service is the world's largest international broadcaster. BBC recently started its services in Hindi language. This news was published in *The Times of India*, *The Hindu* and *BBC Hindi*. Also, there were few follow up stories on this. However, this was the only story, which got a wide mainstream media coverage because this story is more appealing and does not happen everyday. This story has strong emotions and human interest angle, which made the mainstream media to pick this story. *The Times of India* and *The Hindu* have talked about this case in depth but both the newspapers have different facts. For example, *The Times of India* story does not mention that the hospital demanded seven thousand rupees just to release the body of Bhoi's son. However, both the newspapers only discuss the happenings of the case study and do not mention CGNet Swara. Whereas, the article in *BBC Hindi* is in Hindi language, which too discusses the story in detail and fails to mention CGNet Swara in the article. The reason why they did not mention CGNet Swara is maybe they wanted to only focus on the facts of the story in detail. Unlike the *Mint* article, this story is reported on the virtues of its own newsworthiness. Across these two case studies, there is a very different treatment of the actual events. In one case study the event is just a hook for a news story effectively about CGNet Swara and in this case study it is the event itself that gets reported and CGNet Swara is simply the source of the details. CGNet Swara is in some instances a source for news outlets but in other instances the news stories are used as a promotional vehicle for CGNet Swara.

Let us now look at some news values which define this particular case study: The 'frequent' events which occur suddenly like these fit well with the newspapers and are more readily reported. Long-term trends mostly do not receive much coverage. Pitbasu Bhoi's story fits well

with the newspaper and stories with such a plot are readily reported. This news story does not meet the 'threshold' of a whole mainstream news media. CGNet Swara is successful because of its posts. The target audience is basically the local people and it will be relevant only to the local areas where the incident has happened. However, the reason why the mainstream media picked up this story is as a resolution and for the action in the story. These kind of stories do not happen everyday, hence it maybe one more reason for the mainstream media to speak about it. For example, this news story took place in a small town of Ambikapur which won't be relevant to people living in Mumbai. As explained by Galtung and Ruge (2001), 'meaningfulness' can be divided into two parts- cultural proximity and relevance. The CGNet Swara news stories take place with the cultural background of the news-gatherers, which will be regarded as important for the people residing in the tribal areas of Chhattisgarh. It won't be much relevant to the people outside of the Chhattisgarh region. 'Unexpectedness' is basically, a wow factor in a news story. Pitbasu Bhoi's story definitely has an element of unexpectedness or surprise. For example, when his son dies in the hospital due to lack of money. Bad news is always good news for the media. News about death, violence, tragedy, damage and 'negativity' are always rated above than the positive stories. This news story does have a negative aspect of Bhoi losing his son. Readers are always interested in news of other people, which brings out 'personalization or a human interest' angle. Stories of affected people create a human-interest angle. Pitbasu Bhoi's emotional story, losing his son and not getting his wages on time presents a human-interest value to the news piece. It is a broader concept, an example of a bigger problem that concerns the working people and the wage problem

(Galtung and Ruge, 2001).

The story on the CGNet Swara website talks about Pitbasu's story in brief. Only the main points have been discussed. However, there is an audio clip (See Appendix) of the citizen journalist Rakesh Rai speaking with Pitbasu Bhoi, who is addressing the issue that he wasn't paid his wages. The transcription of the audio clip is as follows: 'Hello, I am Rakesh Rai, reporting from

Pampapur village of Surguja district in Chhattisgarh. There is a farmer, Pitbasu Bhoi, who has completed hundred days of work in NREGA. But he has not been paid for even a single day's work so far. Rakesh asks Pitbasu that for how many days has he worked. He says that he has worked for hundred days. "Have you received your wages?" Pitbasu says, "Not even for a single day." "What work are you doing there?" Pitbasu says, "I am working at a road construction site." "Hundred days have been gone by and you still haven't received your wages?" Pitbasu says, "Not at all." "What are the local officials and the agency saying about your situation?" Pitbasu says, "They are saying that I will receive my payments in one or two weeks." Rakesh says that it is good that Pitbasu has worked for hundred days, but a shame that he hasn't received his payments yet.' This was recorded on Pitbasu's hundredth working day. After few days, another citizen journalist who had heard the story about non-payment of wages to Bhoi, found him in a hospital, where his son had died due to lack of money as Bhoi still had not got his wages. Hence, in the audio recording Pitbasu does not talk about his son and CGNet Swara. There is one more post of the same story on the CGNet Swara website, without an audio clip. This post goes in more depth about Pitbasu's situation and how CGNet Swara helped him to get his wages. The earlier post was written and recorded much before than everything happened. This post also provides links to the mainstream newspapers, which carried this news story. It also talks about Bhan Sahu, a woman who reported about non-payment of wages in her area in the same rural job guarantee scheme. When a reporter from *The Hindu* visited the area based on Ms. Sahu's report, more than thousand laborers got paid their wages due from more than six months. It can be said that CGNet Swara was the trigger for successive waves of reportage.

The third case study is of a tribe called Pahari Korwa, found in Raigarh district of Chhattisgarh. The people of this tribe live in villages located in the hilly areas. A few years ago, the villagers witnessed the death of two pregnant women in two consecutive months. They couldn't reach the hospital in time because of lack of proper roads in the villages.

Jeetanram came to know about CGNet Swara and reported this story of the two pregnant women and lack of availability of proper roads. He called the CGNet Swara number and recorded a message. 'If you are listening to this, please call our collector and tell him about this problem'. Fortunately, someone from New Jersey came across this message on the CGNet Swara website and called the collector. It was very surprising as how could somebody from the US was calling him to inform about a village which he hadn't even heard of. A team of government officials reached their village after a few days. They set up a camp and asked everyone what their problems were. Most of the problems were solved right then and there. Today, a school is being constructed and a new road is coming up. This all happened because of just a phone call. CGNet Swara worked to connect the local with a global audience.

This case study only featured in *The Better India*, which is India's fastest growing positive media platform. Not any mainstream news media channels published this story. *The Better India* is a blog post, which shares positive stories about unsung heroes, changemakers, women empowerment, education, culture, social empowerment etc. By building a positive platform, *The Better India* has built and inspired a community of people, who are always sharing ideas and helping one another with resources. Since it is a blog post, the story about CGNet Swara and its impactful stories are more descriptive. Since CGNet Swara has been working as a changemaker in the lives of the tribal people of Chhattisgarh, this blog post has shared many stories about the good work done by CGNet Swara. For instance, they have spoken about how Shubhranshu Choudhary is helping the tribal people by means of a mobile phone and Arjun Venkatraman, IT tech backbone of CGNet Swara, shows how access to connectivity can tackle rural India's grassroot problems. In the month of November 2017; *The Better India* partnered with CGNet Swara to help the readers become changemakers. They were campaigning for CGNet Swara as well as for the tribal people of Chhattisgarh. *The Better India* is motivating the readers to take action and make a change happen. Even though this is a blog post, let us analyze the newsworthiness of this article. Events which occur 'frequently' or suddenly like these fit well

with the blogs and are more readily reported. Long-term trends mostly do not receive much coverage. This story fits well with the blog and stories with such plot twists are readily reported. As explained by Galtung and Ruge (2001), 'meaningfulness' can be divided into two parts-cultural proximity and relevance. The CGNet Swara news stories take place with the cultural background of the news-gatherers, which will be regarded as important for the people residing in the tribal areas of Chhattisgarh. It won't be much relevant to the people outside of the Chhattisgarh region. 'Unexpectedness' is basically, a wow factor in a news story. A person from New Jersey read this story on CGNet Swara website and called the local collector. This is the surprise element in the story. Bad news is always good news for the media. News about death, violence, tragedy, 'negativity' and damage are always rated above than the positive stories. This news story does have a negative aspect of the death of two pregnant women losing their lives due to improper road facility in their village. Readers are always interested in news of other people, which brings out 'personalization or a human interest' angle. Stories of affected people create a human-interest angle. A person from New Jersey helping the tribals of Chhattisgarh presents a human-interest value to the news piece

(Galtung and Ruge, 2001).

It can be said that CGNet Swara, to some extent has not been successful in getting the mainstream media attention. It has been proved less successful than hoped, potentially because the mainstream media has concerns about the accuracy of CGNet Swara reports. Maybe, the mainstream media does not find rural issues newsworthy for their target audience and the endemic corruption in the mainstream press are the reasons why this proved less fruitful for CGNet Swara. Instead, change is primarily created through direct action, thus largely avoiding mainstream media (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015). Most mainstream media channels are not enthusiastic to expand and reach the remote part of the states and they seem more disinterested in covering issues related to the tribal communities (Reichman, Pradhan, Bssawmai, Zaliznyak, Phiri-Chibbonta and Reader, 2015). Case studies become means of promoting CGNet

Swara, as they have been acting as vehicles of promotion for CGNet Swara. The mainstream media is more interested in reporting about CGNet Swara and the good work of educating the tribals of Chhattisgarh rather than reporting just the case studies. Hence, it is the newsworthiness of CGNet Swara and not of the case studies. The traditional media houses have different agendas in terms of how they report the news in different regions (D'Souza, 2017). After 8 years of introducing CGNet Swara, it is still finding its place in the mainstream media channels of India. The service is a success, if probably limited. An editor of a regional daily said, "It is my guess that the NGOs are making the most of it. If you are thinking that the tribals should benefit from this, remember that firstly the individual does not have the courage to speak out. Secondly, talking on the mobile phone to someone and something he or she doesn't know is a big thing" (Lloyd, 2017, p. 1). A recent study showed that mainstream media outlets across India devote only 2 percent of their coverage to India's poor tribal minorities (Smith, 2014).

Let us now look at the four concepts discussed in the Literature Review chapter- Journalism and Fourth Estate/Watchdog role, Development Journalism, Service Journalism and Citizen Journalism. All these concepts describe CGNet Swara to the core. Journalism and the Fourth Estate refers to print journalism and newspapers and news media as a whole (Coetzee, 2016). The fourth estate encompasses all of those who report the news. Journalism criticises powerful interests. The Fourth Estate talks the powerful interests of the society as a whole. CGNet Swara is a voice portal which is surrounded by citizen journalists who report the news. Development Journalism aims to promote improvements in living conditions for people in developing countries (Kelleher, 2014). It can be identified with reporting of rural news, education, health and economic issues that affect a majority of people (Haque, 1986; Shah, 1989 and Vilanilam, 1975). Development Journalism has a touch of human interest. It understands the political situation of the people. The objective of CGNet Swara is helping to improve the conditions of the tribal people of Chhattisgarh. It also reports rural news along with education, health and economic issues of the tribal people. Social movements and the NGOs are working with journalists to help

contribute to CGNet Swara. CGNet Swara works as an advocate for the people rather than the more distanced journalism of the mainstream media.

Service Journalism claims to give help with an entire range of activities, associated with the ordinary interests of its audience, extending from health issues and consumer rights to travel advice and lifestyle information (Eide, 1999). It is the way the news media provides the audience with information, help and advice about the problems of everyday life (Eide and Knight, 1999). It addresses two main types of everyday problems- grievances and risks. CGNet Swara deals with everyday problems of people in the tribal areas. The CGNet Swara team helps and advices the tribal people about the problems of everyday life. The role of a Service Journalist is to informing the readers about the behaviours that might be risky in terms of future consequences and advice the people to take steps to reduce or control the risks, which is what exactly CGNet Swara does. The motto of CGNet Swara is giving a voice to the tribal people of Chhattisgarh, whose voice is lost. It is shifting the power of Journalism to a mobile phone.

Citizen Journalism can be defined as an act carried on by non professionals or citizens, who play an active role in collecting, reporting, analyzing and disseminating news and information (Bowman and Willis, 2003). The power of technology has given ordinary citizens to become journalists and be a part of a new genre of Journalism. Citizen Journalism in India is a fascinating and an important development in what is happening to the media (Agrawal, 2013). However, it is the narrative of ordinary citizens like Pitbasu Bhoi that makes it substantially different from its Western counterparts. CGnet Swara is a voice portal for citizen journalists to report to news about Chhattisgarh using their mobile phones in Hindi and Gondi, the tribal language of Chhattisgarh (Ghosh, 2014). Also, the CGNet Swara team, the citizen activists learn the basics of journalism in training programs (Townsend, 2011). In the second case study which we discussed, Pitbasu Bhoi is not just a daily wage worker. He is now a citizen journalist travelling from village to village, reporting endless stories like his for CGNet Swara and facilitating people to fight for their rights (Agrawal, 2013). As a citizen journalist, his vision is simple but well-defined: 'things are

seriously going wrong around us and if we are able to negotiate some change for ourselves by telling our stories to others, the least it does is to add another day to our life' (Agrawal, 2013). The growth and evolution of citizen journalism in India is a story of ordinary citizens like Pitbasu Bhoi becoming citizen journalists with the help of platforms like CGNet Swara. Pitbasu's case represents a major goal of citizen journalism initiatives like CGNet Swara, to promote government accountability and provide communities with a sense of efficacy (Corsa, 2014). It has helped to create a culture of accountability in the democratic yet often unaccountable system currently found in India (Agrawal, 2013). Citizen Journalism plays an active part in making change happen. CGNet Swara's most active posters are citizen journalists and NGO activists. The top 21 posters include five Adivasis, two Dalits and six from backward castes (Chadha and Steiner, 2015). Hence, it can be said that the people reporting news to CGnet Swara are growing citizen journalists and helping CGNet Swara to grow strong.

In the second half of the chapter I will be analyzing governance in CGNet Swara. I will be talking about how the majority of the posts on the CGNet Swara website are grievances, how marginalized voices are expressed by the tribal people, how journalistic reportage of CGNet Swara stories, leads to resolution of problems, direct official or political responses regarding the issues faced by the tribal communities and also about community self-empowerment. I will be also linking the case studies discussed in the first part of the chapter to each of the topics. It will tell us how CGNet Swara played an important role in resolving the problems faced by the tribal people. In India, there is a huge gap between the rich and the poor. The rural development is slow with lack of proper infrastructure. Labour and health regulations especially in the rural areas are poor and overall the regulatory framework of the society is absent.

CGnet Swara addresses lack of governance in the region: The twenty first century has undoubtedly witnessed a revolution in citizen and government interaction. Over the past few decades, the widening gap between public expectations and perceptions of government performance and a rise in political scandals in India involving large scale corruption have

contributed to a decline in the public interest of governments (Wittemyer, Bailur, Anand, Park and Gigler, 2014). Participation, particularly by the citizens is important for good governance. The avenues for citizens to be heard, demands an environment that enables the government to listen to the local issues and respond (Wittemyer, Bailur, Anand, Park and Gigler, 2014). It is important for any area to have good governance as it promotes community confidence in people and in local government where the decisions are made in a transparent and accountable way. It also helps the local governments to remember that they are acting on behalf of their community. The biggest use of CGNet Swara is to report on the issues of governance and also lack of governance in rural parts of Chhattisgarh. The issues of governance include issue with schools, hospitals, wages, corruption and more (Corsa, 2014). The CGNet Swara initiative has become successful, for example, when a citizen journalist reported non payment of fees under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) and a mainstream Indian newspaper The Hindu paid a visit to the employer, leading to around thousand workers getting paid six months of wages (Wittemyer, Bailur, Anand, Park and Gigler, 2014). Out of the 110 reports on the CGNet Swara website, analysed by Thies (2011), 25% concerned the performance of the local government. CGNet Swara holds the potential to improve the ability to measure the quality and responsiveness of the service providers (Wittemyer, Bailur, Anand, Park and Gigler, 2014). For CGNet Swara founder Choudhary, it is a case of being able to air the needs and grievances of the tribal community. "My tribal classmates once told me our smaller problems can be solved if we have a an effective local government and a democratic communication platform where each has equal right to speak and being heard," said Choudhary adding that when democracy fails people are more susceptible to extremists who can manipulate grudges (D'Souza, 2017, p. 1). Poverty and human development can be treated as governance problems. Owing to their remoteness, the issues affecting the tribal communities are very different from those affecting the rest of the country (Saha, 2012). The reach of traditional media outlets in tribal as well as rural communities is extremely limited partly because of poor infrastructure and language barriers. CGNet Swara

tries to plug this gap at both the ends. Citizen media has matured and taken different forms across the world. CGNet Swara is a platform that lets rural India, the non speaking majority in the country- use the core powers of user generated content to amplify their voice (Saha, 2012). The local government of Chhattisgarh and the tribal areas do not address the issues faced by the rural communities. Individual grievances are because of lack of local governance. CGNet Swara is highlighting where the local government goes wrong. CGNet Swara plays the role of a mediator between the tribal people and the local government. It gives a voice for the people to reach out to the local government and solve their problems. In all the case studies discussed in the first part of the chapter, each of them faced problems related to the lack of governance in the society. Similarly, CGNet Swara gave a voice and a platform to speak and to be heard to Deepak Raj, Pitbasu bhoi and to the village people which lacked proper road facilities.

Most frequent posts are grievances: 80 million members of India's tribal communities lack access to the mainstream media. This often poses serious barriers to the socio-economic development of the tribal people, as their grievances about government neglect and economic exploitation remain unvoiced (Reichman, Pradhan, Bssawmai, Zaliznyak, Phiri-Chibbonta and Reader, 2015). Grievances are the most common type of posts (Mudliar, Donner, and Thies, 2013). It is basically an individual's complaint that was identified, resolved, described or developed by an activist or a journalist against an element of the local bureaucracy not doing what it should (Mudliar, Donner, and Thies, 2013). The problems are of various kinds, for example, wages not being paid, poor conditions of hospitals, schools not working, water scarcity, complaints against private companies, claims of corruption etc. (Saha, 2012). Hence, grievances make a major part of posts, almost 34%, mostly related to a variety of livelihood and civic related issues (Mudliar, Donner, and Thies, 2013). Almost 70% of the posts concentrate on localized issues as compared to the issues of significance at a state or a national level. Usually, the posts are about issues affecting the individual, but symptomatic of greater institutional failure (Saha, 2012). The posts range from complaints over disparity in insurance rates received by farmers to a

demand for better wages for labourers. Non-payment of wages under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) form the bulk of grievances (Mudliar, Donner, and Thies, 2013). The volume implies the immense potential as well as serious mismanagement of the employment guarantee scheme across rural India. CGNet Swara focuses on grievances affecting multiple people as well as people having personal problems. The responses of the contributors reveal that CGNet Swara is perceived as a tool that carries complaints forward and helps in their resolution (Mudliar, Donner, and Thies, 2013). For instance, when a contributor was asked how to explain CGNet Swara to someone who knew nothing about it, her response was, "I tell them that it is a very nice medium where we can speak about any irregularities in government schemes. When you speak, then the government and the administration listen to you and take every step to address the situation" (Mudliar, Donner, and Thies, 2013, p. 73). The CGNet Swara website has all the posts under impact where there are numerous grievances posts are displayed, for example, payment of overdue wages, resumption of mid day meals in schools, provision of denied ration cards, repair of broken hand pumps and other important issues. One report tells the story of an officer who took a bribe of Rs. 99,000 from 33 Baiga Adivasis. Upon hearing the report on CGNet Swara, the officer not only returned the bribe to the Adivasis but also recorded his own post to apologise (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015). Even when a grievance does not get resolved, that has been published and is now publicly available in an impact in itself. Grievance redress is found to be the most impactful one (Corsa, 2014). The most common solution, when it comes it grievance redress is relatively low tech, a helpline with live operators. For example, Childline is a government helpline in India that helps children in distress. CGNet Swara has some similarities with this helpline but there are also some key differences. The CGNet Swara reports are monologues as opposed to two-way communications, the reports are recorded and then released to the public (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015). CGNet Swara still receives a large number of grievance posts, which suggests that there might be problems in the state's grievance redress mechanisms. This also indicates the mismanagement or negligence of the

state's officials (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015). For grievance reports, a follow up process is important for resolving a complaint. For resolving the grievances, CGNet Swara finds social activists who contact local police and politicians to lobby for solving the problem (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015). Pitbasu's story is not the only success story of the portal. Several reports have led to a redressing of grievances and benefited local communities (Agrawal, 2013). To date, CGNet Swara has helped to solve around 266 grievance reports. All this can be linked with Martin Eide and Graham Knight's article on Service Journalism. They talk about Service Journalism in the context of everyday of the problems of everyday life for people in western developed nations. Service Journalism is about the news media providing their audiences with information, advice and help about the problems of everyday life (Eide and Knight, 1999). It addresses two main types of everyday problems- grievances and risks. Grievances tend to be discussed more than the risks. CGNet Swara has been talking about grievances the most, and different everyday life problems that are encountered in the CGNet Swara posts, which make us link the two. In terms of the case studies discussed of Deepak Raj who was sold as a labourer, Pitbasu Bhoi, whose son died because he did not get his wages on time and the two pregnant women who died due to lack of proper road facility; have a grievance factor in each of them.

Marginalized voices expressed: Technology is seen as a solution in search of a problem. An old axiom says, 'Connectivity is a powerful hammer, but not every problem is a nail.' But here, the poor rural citizens of Chhattisgarh were living in serious information poverty. There was virtually no private media available, their TV access is limited to soap operas, Bollywood movies and government sponsored news which are in Hindi and a state run radio which is in Hindi again (Townson, 2014). The voice of the rural people is almost absent from the national media conversation (Hume, 2012). CGNet Swara empowers the marginalized people, including India's 80 million tribal communities, by giving them a platform to communicate with each other, national and the global media. It strives to put the voice of the marginalized people on the public agenda by gathering their voices and publishing them (Hairsine, 2016). CGNet Swara gives the

rural and less literate communities a way to connect with the outside world using their own voice. It represents a voice of the people who really don't have a voice in today's world. Frequently, the voice is subdued by middlemen, politicians and the society, who refuse to look at a balanced development for all (Venkatraman, 2017). The platform has been responsible for bringing about a change to the lives of many rural communities in the Maoist affected areas of Chhattisgarh (Chatterjee, 2015). The vision of Shubhranshu Choudhary is to create this communication or rectify this breakage of communication between the tribal and the broader community. There are many tribal people who have mobile phones and a voice that must be heard or expressed. The barrier is that they do not speak Hindi or English, in which all other mainstream channels operate, be in journalism, information or the digital world. The tribal communities are outside the digital world and so using mobile phones was the last option (Ray, 2010). CGNet Swara works in four simple steps, first, villagers give a missed call on the number; second, they receive a call with an automated message which asks if they want to record a message or listen to other recorded messages; third, the recordings go to a team of moderators- journalists and the activists; fourth, after moderation, they are available for a playback on the CGNet Swara website and over the phone (Harriet, 2015). One of the aims of this project is connecting people within communities. The mobile phone aspect of CGNet Swara is more focused towards the community members and the website can be used to target a wider audience, in other parts of the country (Townson, 2014). From instances of authorities ensuring certain grievances are resolved, to creating awareness across villages and bringing groups to unite for a cause, CGNet Swara has ensured that the voices of the voiceless are heard by the appropriate people (Raghunath, 2012). Considering the case studies, Deepak Raj, Pitbasu Bhoi and the village people where the two pregnant women died were marginalized people who did have not a voice of their own. Hence, it gave these people a platform to talk to and get help to solve their problems. If CGNet Swara wouldn't have helped them, the cases would have remained unsolved.

CGNet Swara and journalistic reportage leading to resolution of problems: Most of the mainstream media and social media are largely for the educated, urban and English speaking people. However, CGNet Swara is a platform for the people on the other side of the digital divide. Apart from countless stories about corruption, lack of facilities, and inhuman living conditions, these are stories of human suffering that might never find a place in national or local newspapers. It is more of a democratic medium for the tribal communities, who never had the opportunity to speak or to be heard. Mainstream media has relatively low penetration and reach because of illiteracy, poverty, inaccessibility and violence related to the Maoist insurgency throughout eastern India (Reichman, Pradhan, Bssawmai, Zaliznyak, Phiri-Chibbonta and Reader, 2015). By saying so, it is still important for the issues and the problems of the tribal people to get journalistic attention because that's what helps the rural people to solve their problems. Though CGNet Swara is not successful in the mainstream media, it is successful locally. Hence, it is an effective form of local journalism. When a mainstream media channel picks up a story, it takes it to that level where you are forced to act on those actions. Mainstream media have a strong voice, which helps in solving issues. The stories which are picked by CGNet Swara and also the mainstream media channels force the authorities to act which results in resolution of problems. Shubhranshu Choudhary (2014, p. 1) says, "Many national newspapers pick up our stories and report them, thus reaching it to more people. The aim is to complete the circle where rural and urban activists help each other." He also says that today's mainstream media has black holes where there is no space for stories of the rural areas. But slowly, the tribal voices are being heard (Mushtaq, 2014). Deepak Raj's parents got help from citizen journalists which helped them to get their son back through CGNet Swara. That's when The Mint picked up the story and discussed in detail. Let us talk about Pitbasu's story, a story of a father struggling to get his wages while his son dies in the hospital. The story was picked up by mainstream media, after nine months of publications, public activism and CGNet Swara reports, he finally got his wages. Now the most powerful impact in this case is that Pitbasu is no longer just a daily wage worker. He is now a

citizen journalist travelling from village to village, reporting endless stories like his for CGNet Swara and facilitating people to fight for their rights (Agrawal, 2013). The source of one story, now becomes a citizen journalist. The story of two pregnant women who died because of lack of proper roads was published on a blog post. All the stories got a journalistic reportage and the problems were resolved.

Direct official or political responses: Many of the higher government officials deny that CGNet Swara influences them (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015). However, gaining their affirmation isn't entirely vital for having an impact, as CGNet Swara may have influence via channels which are hidden from them, for example by lobbying by CGNet Swara field team members (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015). Nevertheless, they are interested in making it easier for the officials to engage with the platform. Chhattisgarh Chief Secretary Sunil Kumar said, "I personally find CGNet Swara an effective source of feedback and grievance redressal from the grassroots. I do make use of it on and off" (Acharya, 2013, p. 1). But, there are some officials who listen to CGNet Swara but analysis of the server logs reveal that no incoming phone calls from any of the numbers belong to the officials (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015). The officials and administration people have different perspectives of CGNet Swara, some are supportive and some are not. The audience of CGNet Swara is limited and based on this, one official person said, "Unless CGNet Swara achieved critical mass amongst people, I would not consider it as a serious effort in representation of people." He also suggested that a service like this would play a limited role in gathering an audience unless it is scaled up to be a bigger part of an entity, for instance like a community radio station (Mudliar, Donner and Thies, 2013, p. 75). Concerned about the forerunners of CGNet Swara, a senior official expressed that the service might be used by people who perceive to be 'anti-state.' After a news report has been recorded on the website, the officials do respond to it and appropriate action is taken in most of the cases. For instance, in a report about school workers in Dantewada district, who hadn't been paid their wages for more than a year, the CGNet Swara moderators posted a message to an email list which

included the phone number of a government authority to call. The authority was soon flooded with calls and all the school workers were paid their wages. Through a platform like CGNet Swara, it helps the tribal communities to force the officials to take action and solve their problems. Let us look at how government officials played a role in the three case studies discussed earlier. In Deepak Raj's case, within six days of reporting on CGNet Swara, the local government brought him home. In Pitbasu Bhoi's case, some local officials helped him in getting his wages. However, the Chief Executive Officer of the Zilla Parishad, Surguja district denied the fact that the death of Pitbasu's son is linked to the delay of his wages. According to him, the wages were already released in fourteen days. In the third case study of the two pregnant women who died because of lack of proper road facility, a team of government officials set up a camp in the village and solved the problems.

Community self-empowerment: CGNet Swara is empowering the communities by giving them a platform to speak about their problems. It has brought the concept of self-empowerment to its users. Having a voice and feeling heard is the biggest impact of CGNet Swara. It has been estimated that almost 100 million members of the tribal communities lack access to any mainstream media platforms. This would add serious barriers to their socio-economic development, as their grievances about government negligence and economic exploitation remain unvoiced (Acharya, 2013, p. 3). Most of the posts on the CGNet Swara website are from typically unheard and powerless sections of the society, the tribal areas with low levels of literacy (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015). These people who come from the communities that often face neglect and they love to have their freedom to choose their own topics and relate to them in their own voice. Being heard by other people, gives them a sense of solidarity, of a change in the perceptions of the people of the problems faced by unguarded populations. It creates connections between the communities and the government and also between the communities and the mainstream journalists (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015). Personal development is one more factor, which benefits the contributors. Doing good and helping other

people is what drives them to work and contribute to CGNet Swara (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015). Another impact is awareness and education in the tribal communities. For some listeners, CGNet Swara is to build awareness of current affairs. They get news and information about the world. CGNet Swara builds solidarity and acts as an educator. For example a contributor said, "Adivasis from different parts of the country get to listen to the issues faced by Adivasis in other parts of India and realize that we share the same problems. Hence, it proves to be a great learning experience. When they hear a land grabbing issue, they can take a lesson and be more careful about protecting themselves" (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015, p. 7). CGNet Swara is a source of inspiration for many tribal people. Even the songs and poems are an inspiration for some. Also, resolution of other people's problems is particularly seen as most inspiring (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015). Seeing other people's grievances being solved, gives the tribals confidence that they too can change things for them and around them. CGNet Swara has also helped people in achieving their social goals. For instance, one of a citizen journalist said that he wanted to learn journalism that benefits people with little resources, which CGNet Swara helped him to do so (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015). Pitbasu Bhoi is no longer just a daily wage worker. He is now a citizen journalist travelling from village to village, reporting endless stories like his for CGNet Swara and facilitating people to fight for their rights (Agrawal, 2013). Overall, CGNet Swara has played a key role in bringing community self-empowerment in the lives of several tribal people.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

CGNet Swara has become a synonym for journalism for public issues in the rural areas of Chhattisgarh. In a scenario, where the mainstream media has not yet reached these remote areas, an alternative medium like CGNet Swara is playing a role of a subordinate media with its commitment to justice, development and democracy. CGNet Swara acts as a citizen journalism platform established for tribal people and rural areas that was previously locked out of the mainstream media. However, it faces a constant struggle to insert itself into the existing socio political structures of the state of Chhattisgarh (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015). Widespread acceptance of mobile phones in these areas further indicates that it raises the livelihood problems of the local people in their local language. Initiatives such as CGNet Swara have the potential to address development problems in remote and rural areas. CGNet Swara has many advantages such as low cost, relying on existing penetration of mobile phones, oral communication, the content is relevant, language friendly for the tribal people and is participatory in nature. This community media forms an important link between the citizens and the state. CGNet Swara is an approach, which emphasizes on empowering the disfranchised. A low cost participatory initiative such as CGNet Swara has huge implications for creating awareness, improving governance and stimulating development not only in the rural parts of India, but also in other developing parts of India. CGNet Swara was developed through a clear understanding of the ground realities and to develop a solution. So is social media on mobile phones the ultimate magic formula for the flow of information? CGNet Swara is just a baby step in this direction. It is still in the beta experimental mode. The case for its use among the adivasis nas been proven by initial experiment. But CGNet Swara actually has significant positive impact on many tribal lives and livelihoods (Saha, 2012).

In my study of the three main cases studies, it can be seen how CGNet Swara has helped the people to solve their problems. The case studies have described a participatory Citizen Journalism platform for a place where people were knocked out of the mainstream media attention (Mudliar, Donner and Thies, 2013). They have been also used as wheels of promotion for CGNet Swara in order to spread its reach across India.

The most striking impact of CGNet Swara is its simultaneous depth and breadth. On one hand CGNet Swara has enabled important interventions, including timely responses to cholera, payment of overdue wages, delivery of missing school meals, fixing hand pumps and so on. At the same time, these tangible impacts represent only a fraction of what CGNet Swara has done as reported by the respondents (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015, p. 9). It has given the contributors a sense of feeling heard, enabling artistic expression, providing entertainment to the tribals and personal development. Meanwhile, CGNet Swara has helped the tribal communities discover their issues, improving their awareness of what is news, and making them feel that hope and change is possible (Marathe, O'Neill, Pain and Thies, 2015). By no means is the system perfect, but they are trying their best to resolve all the issues by giving them a constant platform to talk on. For example, there have been many grievances, which haven't resolved yet. As a whole, this offers strong evidence that CGNet Swara is playing an important part in the lives of the tribal people.

REFERENCES

Acharya, K. (2013). A Google for India's Poor. *Inter Press News*. Retrieved from
http://www.ipsnews.net/2013/11/a-google-for-indias-poor/

Acharya, K. (2013). *CGNet Swara.* Retrieved from
http://www.comminit.com/global/content/cgnet-swara

Alike, 9 (2), 65-79. Retrieved from http://itidjournal.org/index.php/itid/article/viewFile/1053/433

Amid fund crunch, CGNet Swara eyes shift to Bluetooth radio tech. (2016, September 25).
Livemint, 1-3. Retrieved from
http://www.livemint.com/Politics/UcrYsrB8fIAGTDiIoC452N/Amid-fund-crunch-CGNet-
Swara-eyes-shift-to-Bluetooth-radio.html

Beckett, C., & Mansell, R. (2008). Crossing boundaries: New Media and Networked Journalism.
International Communication Association, 1 (1), 92-104. doi: 10.1111/j.1753-9137.2007.00010.x

Bhalla, N. (2010). India's neglected tribes gain voice in mobile news service. *Reuters.* Retrieved
from
http://in.reuters.com/article/idINIndia-48388320100511

Bowman, S., & Willis, C. (2003). We Media. How Audiences Are Shaping the Future of
News and Information. *The Media Center at the American Press Institute.* Retrieved from
http://www.hypergene.net/wemedia/download/we_media.pdf.

Brunetti, A., & Weder, B. (2003). A free press is bad news for corruption. *Journal of Public
Economics 87 (7-8)*, 1801-1824. Retrieved from
https://s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/5559313/free_press_corr_jpe2003_.pdf?AW
SAccessKeyId=AKIAIWOWYYGZ2Y53UL3A&Expires=1520167993&Signature=4nstIIFceoJ4
S%2FjiInzv5cw1XtU%3D&response-content-
disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3DA_free_press_is_bad_news_for_corruption.pdf

Campbell, V. (n.d.). Theorizing Citizenship in Citizen Journalism. (Masters diss., University of
Leicester, England) Retrieved from
https://lra.le.ac.uk/bitstream/2381/31637/2/CJ%20and%20Citizenship_VPC_AM.pdf

CGNet Swara. (2010). *CGNet Swara Impact.* Retrieved from http://cgnetswara.org/impact.html

CGNet Swara. (2010). *CGNet Swara Impact.* Retrieved from
http://cgnetswara.org/impact2.php?page=110

CGNet Swara. (2010). *CGNet Swara Impact.* Retrieved from
http://www.cgnetswara.org/index.php?id=2767

Chadha, K. & Steiner, L. (2015). The Potential and Limitations of Citizen Journalism Initiatives.
Journalism Studies, 16 (5), 706-718. doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2015.1054179

Channel, A. (2010). Gatekeeping and Citizen Journalism: A qualitative examination of
participatory newsgathering. (Masters Diss., University of South Florida, Florida) Retrieved from
http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2597&context=etd

Chatterjee, S. (2015). *A Rural Community News Portal that is telling stories from India's Interiors.* Retrieved from https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/rural-community-news-portal-telling-stories-indias-interiors-35077

Choudhury, C. (2011). *Urgent Call: Cellphones Help a Marginalized Indian Community Speak Out.* Retrieved from https://archives.cjr.org/reports/urgent_call.php

Choudhary, S. (2016). In Central India, one phone call can change a community. Retrieved from http://emergencyjournalism.net/in-central-india-one-phone-call-can-change-a-community/index.html

Chouhan, S., & Phartiyal, S. (2013). Who are India's Maoists and why they are in the news. *Reuters.* Retrieved from http://blogs.reuters.com/india/2013/05/29/who-are-indias-maoists-and-why-they-are-in-the-news/

Chowdhry, S. (2013). CGNet Swara | Spreading a revolution with words. *Livemint,* 1-5. Retrieved from http://www.livemint.com/Leisure/JLMeY7AwookCpyraa04b0O/CGNet-Swara--Spreading-a-revolution-with-words.html

Cln, L. (2013). Data collection techniques a guide for researchers in humanities and education. *International Research Journal of Computer Science and Information Systems (IRJCSIS) Vol. 2(3)* pp. 40-44. Retrieved from http://www.interesjournals.org/full-articles/data-collection-techniques-a-guide-for-researchers-in-humanities-and-education.pdf?view=inline

Coetzee, D. (2016). *Newspapers and the Fourth Estate: Why a free press is important for brands.* Retrieved from http://themediaonline.co.za/2016/10/newspapers-and-the-fourth-estate-the-importance-of-a-free-press-and-what-this-means-for-brands/

Donohue, G., & Tichenor, P. (1995). A Guard Dog Perspective on the Role of the Media. *Journal of Communication, 45(2),* 115-128.

D'Souza, S. (2017). *CGNet Swara- Making Media Democratic.* Retrieved from http://www.justaplatform.com/cgnet-swara/

Dutta, M. (2016). *The Media War on Indigenous People and Activists.* Retrieved from http://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/NewsDetail/index/1/7773/The-Media-War-on-Indigenous-People-and-Activists

Eide, M. (2015). *Service Journalism.* Retrieved from https://www.openschoolofjournalism.com/documents/13647/106563/JG370_Service-Journalism.pdf/05a5e7ed-6fb6-4ba1-9731-81f51491bc83

Eide, M., & Knight, G. (1999). Service Journalism and the Problems of Everyday Life. *European Journal of Communication, 14 (4),* 525-547.

Farooquee, N. (2013, October 2). Citizen Journalism Grows in India's War-Torn Tribal Belt. *The New York Times,* 1-5. Retrieved from https://india.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/10/02/citizen-journalism-grows-in-indias-war-torn-tribal-belt/

Gandhy, S. (2010). *The people's voice.* Retrieved July 10, 2017 from http://base.d-p-h.info/pt/fiches/dph/fiche-dph-8570.html

Ghannadi, A. (n.d.). *What are the features of citizen journalism and effects of that in International Relations?* Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/13148582/What_are_the_features_of_citizen_journalism_and_effects_of_that_in_International_Relations?auto=download

Ghosh, A. (2014, March 20). CGNet Swara: Shifting the power of journalism to the mobile phone for Adivasis. *Livemint,* 1-4. Retrieved from http://www.livemint.com/Consumer/Bj8phV6COEqlGMp3HhIuuL/CGNet-Swara-Shifting-the-power-of-journalism-to-the-mobile.html

Gill, K. (2017). Definition of the Fourth Estate. Retrieved from https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-the-fourth-estate-3368058

Hairsine, K. (2016). Advancing Freedom of Expression: Using digital innovation to foster Article 19 in the Global South. *Deutsche Welle,* 3-31. Retrieved from http://www.dw.com/downloads/35778165/dwaeditiondigitalinnovationsection-2best-practice.pdf

Hanitzsch, T. (2005). Building a home for the study of Journalism: ICA creates a Journalism studies interest group. *Journalism, 6(1),* 107-115. doi: 10.1177/1464884905048955

Harriet. (2015). *CGNet Swara: Village voices in India's media black zone.* Retrieved from http://www.contributoria.com/issue/2015-03/546629626239e6c21500005d.html

Hartley, J. (2013). Selection and Construction. In Hartley, J (Ed.). Understanding News. 75-83. Retrieved from https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/aut/reader.action?docID=1222779&query=

I Love India. (n.d.). *Culture of Chhattisgarh.* Retrieved July 10, 2017 from http://www.iloveindia.com/states/chhattisgarh/culture.html

India Netzone (n.d.). *Tribes of Chhattisgarh.* Retrieved July 10, 2017 from http://www.indianetzone.com/50/tribes_chhattisgarh.htm

Indian Holiday Pvt Limited (n.d.). *Gond Tribe.* Retrieved July 10, 2017 from https://www.indianholiday.com/tourist-attraction/kawardha/tribal-cultrue-in-kawardha/gond-tribe.html

Jarvis, J. (2006). *Networked Journalism.* Retrieved from https://buzzmachine.com/2006/07/05/networked-journalism/

Kak, M., Tripathy, P., & Lal, M. (2007). *Whose Media? A Women's space.* Retrieved from https://books.google.co.nz/books?id=QN2ANPKbhyQC&pg=PA95&lpg=PA95&dq=media+in+chhattisgarh&source=bl&ots=xU8aJl7mXp&sig=VhzpGeB4X61s2H06bm-7Rv1ahVk&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiqqcP7lODVAhWKxrwKHTCUAZc4ChDoAQhWMAk#v=onepage&q=media%20in%20chhattisgarh&f=false

Kelleher, A, 'New Media vs. Traditional Media', Storify (28 March 2012), http://storify.com/KelleherAllison/the-impact-of-new-media-on-traditional-mass-media/preview, accessed 10 October 2013

Kelleher, C. (2013). *A Consideration of Development Journalism In the Context of Rwandan Newspapers, 2013.* (Masters diss., The University of Texas, Austin). Retrieved from https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/bitstream/handle/2152/26095/KELLEHER-THESIS-2014.pdf?sequence=1

Kokenghe, J. (2010). *Why People Produce Citizen Journalism: A Qualitative Analysis.* (Masters diss., University of Missouri, Columbia). Retrieved from https://mospace.umsystem.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10355/9289/research.pdf?sequence=3

Lerner, D. (1958). *The passing of traditional society*. New York: Free Press. Retrieved from http://education.uci.edu/uploads/7/2/7/6/72769947/lit-approach.pdf

Littau, J. (2007). *Citizen Journalism and Community Building: Predictive Measures of Social Capital Generation* (Master's Thesis, University of Missouri). Retrieved from http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.84.4854&rep=rep1&type=pdf

Manecksha, F. (2011). *Chhattisgarh media: Sounds of Silence.* Retrieved from http://www.thehoot.org/free-speech/media-freedom/chhattisgarh-media-sounds-of-silence-8557

Marathe, M., O'Neill, J., Pain, P., & Thies, W. (2015). Revisiting CGNet Swara and its Impact in Rural India. *ACM,* 1-10. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1145/2737856.2738026

Merriam, S. (1998). Case Studies as Qualitative Research. In Merriam, S (Ed.), *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education,* 27-43. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass Inc. Retrieved from http://www.appstate.edu/~jacksonay/rcoe/merriam.pdf

Mishra, K., & Krishnaswami, S. (2015). A new genre of Journalism - Citizen Journalism. *International Journal of English Language, Literature and Humanities, 3 (4), 52-67.* Retrieved from http://ijellh.com/papers/2015/June/06-52-67-June-2015.pdf

Mudliar, P., Donner, J., & Thies, W. (2013). Emergent Practices Around CGNet Swara: A Voice Forum for Citizen Journalism in Rural India. *Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-Share*

Mushtaql, S. (May 03, 2014). Report through a cell phone and listen to the news through the cell phone. *The Weekend Leader.* Retrieved from http://www.theweekendleader.com/Heroism/1875/people-s-media.html

Nip, J. (2006). Exploring the Second Phase of Public Journalism. *Journalism Studies, 7 (2),* 212-236. doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/14616700500533528

Nies, T., D'heer, E., Coppens, S., Deursen, D., Mannens, E., Paulussen, S., and Walle, R. (n.d). *Bringing Newsworthiness into the 21st Century.* Retrieved from http://ceur-ws.org/Vol-906/paper11.pdf

Norris, P. (2008). *Driving Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi: https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511790614.009

Ogan, C. (1980). *Development Journalism/Communication: The Status of the Concept.* (Masters diss., School of Journalism Indiana University, Indiana). Retrieved from
http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED194898.pdf

Open School of Journalism. (n.d.). Fourth Estate. Retrieved from
https://www.openschoolofjournalism.com/resources/encyclopedia/fourth-estate

Onyango, M. (2011). *The Impact of Citizen Journalism on Gatekeeping Process: A Case Study of Kenya Broadcasting Corporation Television.* (Masters diss., University of Nairobi, Kenya). Retrieved from
http://erepository.uonbi.ac.ke/bitstream/handle/11295/60605/The%20Impact%20of%20Citizen%20Journalism%20on%20Gate%20keeping%20Process%3A%20A%20Case%20Study%20of%20Kenya%20Broadcasting%20Corporation%20Television.pdf?sequence=3

Ouarezki, S., & Saci, N. (2013). Data Collection Methods: Research Methodology. Retrieved from
http://www.academia.edu/7226538/DATA_COLLECTION_METHODS_RESEARCH_METHODOLOGY

Pain, P. (n.d.). *Citizen journalism and mainstream media---Competing entities or complementary beings?* Retrieved from
http://www.academia.edu/8383464/Citizen_journalism_and_mainstream_media---Competing_entities_or_complementary_beings

Painter, J., Roy, P., Lloyd, J., Sharma, S., Sen, A., Banerjee, J., & Agrawal. (2013). *India's Media Boom: The Good News and the Bad.* Retrieved from
https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2017-12/India%E2%80%99s%20Media%20Boom%20the%20good%20news%20and%20the%20bad.pdf

Pandey, G., Joshi, C., & Das, P. (2017). *Problems and Perspectives of the Relationship between the Media and Human rights.* Retrieved from
https://books.google.co.nz/books?id=ExVUDgAAQBAJ&pg=PA159&lpg=PA159&dq=media+in+chhattisgarh+overall&source=bl&ots=NTQmbNGDTW&sig=bFmAUboD6MS2EXzQrqTrS_beBhc&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwij2qfIyOfUAhVDa7wKHTfsCGgQ6AEISDAH#v=onepage&q=media%20in%20chhattisgarh%20overall&f=false

Pont, S. (2010). *Empowered by Information: CGNet Swara in Chhattisgarh.* Retrieved from
https://www.ndn.org/blog/2010/04/empowered-information-cgnet-swara-chhattisgarh

Ravi, S. (2011, January, 16). Guarantee work, not worth. *BBC Hindi,* 1-2. Retrieved from
https://www.bbc.com/hindi/india/2011/01/110116_mnarega_salman_pp.shtml

Ray, A. (2010). *CGNet Swara.* Retrieved July 20, 2017 from
http://transparency.globalvoicesonline.org/project/cgnet-swara

Rees, A. (2013). *TIMES Pieces: On the Line with CGNet Swara.* Retrieved from
https://reset.org/node/24736

Rezwan. (2012). *CGNet Swara: Enabling Tribals of Chhattisgarh To Tell Their Stories.* Retrieved from https://rising.globalvoices.org/blog/2012/04/22/cgnet-swara-enabling-tribals-of-chhattisgarh-to-tell-their-stories/

Rosen, J. (2006). *The People Formerly Known as the Audience.* PressThink. Retrieved from https://www.athensjournals.gr/media/2017-3-1-4-Noor.pdf

Saha, A. (2012). Cellphones as a Tool for Democracy The Example of CGNet Swara. *Economic and Political Weekly, xlvii no 15,* 23-26. Retrieved from http://indiagovernance.gov.in/files/cgnet-swara.pdf

Salmon. L. (2017). *The importance of case studies in social research.* Retrieved from https://www.changeworks.org.uk/news-and-events/blog/the-importance-of-case-studies-in-social-research

Schultz, J. (1998). The Fourth Estate: A Changing Doctrine. *Reviving the Fourth Estate* (pp 23-46). doi: https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511597138.003

Sethi, M. (2011, January 22). Son dies in hospital as man awaits MNREGS payments. *The Hindu,* 1-2. Retrieved from http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/Son-dies-in-hospital-as-man-awaits-MNREGS-payments/article15527765.ece

Sharmal, S. (2011, January 21). Father struggles to get NREGA wages, son dies in hospital. *The Times of India,* 1. Retrieved from https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Father-struggles-to-get-NREGA-wages-son-dies-in-hospital/articleshow/7336434.cms

Shoemaker, P. (2006). News and newsworthiness: A commentary. *Communications 31,* 105-111. doi: 10.1515/COMMUN.2006.007.

Singh, R. (2016). Chhattisgarh: Fastest Developing State of India. *Economic and Political Weekly,* 53, 64-93. Retrieved from http://www.epw.in/system/files/pdf/2016_51/53/Chhattisgarh_Add_Final.pdf

Singh, T. (2016). *This Man Grew up Among the Adivasis. Today, He Is Changing Their World with Mobile Phones.* Retrieved from https://www.thebetterindia.com/43549/cgnet-swara-mobile-journalism/

Singer J. (2004). The Socially Responsible Existentialist; A normative emphasis for journalists in a new media environment. *Journalism Studies, 7,1,* 2-18. doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/14616700500450277

Smith, R. (2014). Shubhranshu Choudhary: Giving a Voice to a Ravaged, Neglected Region. Retrieved from https://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/innovators/2014/06/140617-shubhranshu-choudhary-india-maoists-citizen-journalism/

Tinsley, E. (2013). *In rural India, a hub for tech, mobile innovation gives isolated people a voice.* Retrieved July 20, 2017 from http://ijnet.org/en/blog/rural-india-hub-tech-mobile-innovation-gives-isolated-people-voice

Townsend, J. (2011). *Voice of Chhattisgarh: A CGNet Swara Origin Story.* Retrieved from https://www.changemakers.com/blog/voice-chhattisgarh-origin-story

Townson, P. (2014). CGNet Swara: A Voice for the Voiceless. Retrieved from http://www.dc4mf.org/en/content/cgnet-swara-voice-voiceless-0

Tumber, H. (2001). Democracy in the Information Age: The Role of Fourth Estate in Cyberspace. *Information, Communication & Society, 4(1),* 95-112. doi: 10.1080/13691180122542

UNESCO Chair on Community Media. (2012). Democratizing Technology: The Story of CGNet Swara. Retrieved from http://uccommedia.in/news/democratizing-technology-the-story-of-cgnet-swara/

Why is Good Governance important. (n.d). Retrieved from http://www.goodgovernance.org.au/about-good-governance/why-is-good-governance-important/

Wittemyer, R., Bailur, S., Anand, N., Park, K., & Gigler., B. (2014). New Routes to Governance: A Review of Cases in Participation, Transparency and Accountability. In Gigler, B ., & Bailur, S. (Eds.), *Closing the Feedback Loop: Can Technology bridge the Accountability Gap* (pp 43-66). doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1596/978-1-4648-0191-4

Witt, L. (2004). Is Public Journalism Morphing into the Public's Journalism? *National Civic Review, 93 (3)*, 49-57. doi: 10.1002/ncr.61

World Health Organization. (n.d). Community Empowerment. Retrieved from http://www.who.int/healthpromotion/conferences/7gchp/track1/en/

Appendix

Links to the Audio Clips

1. http://cgnetswara.org/impact2.php?page=110
2. http://www.cgnetswara.org/index.php?id=2767