

# Emergence of Alternative media Platforms and its Impact on the Society

## ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

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# ABSTRACT

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## Introduction

Alternative media emerges to give an alternative to the existing media institution, namely mainstream media, and to express an alternative framework in the media landscape. Alternative media may be described as media that is motivated by the desire to create an alternative communication system. Seeking and creating alternatives to the mainstream or prevailing system and structure has been a continual activity and an element of human desire throughout human history and development. John Downing (Downing, 2001) characterized this phenomenon as an ongoing continuous process and associated it with "everything, at some moment in time, is the alternative to something else" (Marisol Sandoval & Christian Fuchs, 2010).

Technological development or innovation has always been a driving force behind socio-political development. It has been in the center or at critical position of socio-political dynamics from the start of human civilization. Every technical development or innovation changes society. It has an influence on society's sociopolitical framework and economic order. Whether it is the invention of the wheel or the development of the steam engine, all inventions or innovations play an important part in the process of socio-political and cultural transformation. Industrialization became a transformative force for human connections in society, whether they were political, economic, social, or cultural. The single innovation had an impact on the political system, cultural dynamics, economic structure, and other aspects of society, and a bigger transformation occurred through time in all areas of life. The industrial society emerged, followed by the information society and finally the global society, as a result of an innovation that occurred in the form of a steam engine and other industrial associated technologies, telecommunication and digital technologies.

The development of mobile technology and the internet has fundamentally changed how media and communication are organized. While the mainstream media ecosystem has embraced a complex technological infrastructure, alternative media ecosystems have embraced mobile and internet as a practical, efficient, and effective

technological setup to challenge the established media and communication paradigm. Thus, the alternative media model completes its journey challenging, questioning, and counterbalancing the dominant and mainstream media model and communication system; in this course of emergence of alternative media, socio-political and cultural factors have always been pivotal and crucial, and alternative media has always strived to balance the disparity in the communication system.

The mainstream media gets its major operational thrust, lifeblood and economic resources from advertising; drawn primarily from the upper-class elite and middle-class spectrum of society. These segments of society mainly live in metropolitan areas, capital cities and small towns. This media business model is referred to as the news advertising revenue model, which is the dominant operating model of mainstream media, i.e. from print and electronic media and, to a greater extent, from web media (Nigam & Gaur, 2020).

This economic constraint on media operations has placed the elite and middle-class spectrum at the centre of media discourse, creating a media dynamic that excludes the concerns, issues, and problems of villages, remote areas, forests, and tribal areas. This type of operation has instigated the need for the emergence of alternative media that are indigenous in nature, a community-centric operation that mainly covers and focuses on local issues and people's problems that are ignored by the mainstream media. These alternative media, with specific purpose and nature, expressing grassroots issues of marginalized groups, are referred to as Hyper Local News Portals, news platforms that address current concerns of the local population of the respective area and targeted community audience.

In developing countries like India, where there are numerous rifts and differences among the citizenry at all levels, whether they are economic, socio-political, or cultural. In such a society, the media serves as more than just an instrument for the dissemination of information and entertainment; it also has a bigger role to play in raising analytical consciousness among the masses so that society can address issues like slavery, poverty, illiteracy, inequality, and hopelessness (Joshi, 2007). Despite this moral and significant responsibility; Media also have a certain functional constraint of political economy. It has limitations and problems of a political, economic and cultural nature.

To address the limitations and constraints of the mainstream media model and the exclusionary dominant communication system, alternative media emerges and challenges the dominant narrative, unidirectional reality, status quo, and hegemonic socio-political and cultural order by providing a voice and a platform to the voiceless, marginalised, and disregarded community living in the country's distant, peripheral, rural, and isolated areas; confronted with poverty, unemployment, and other challenges such as challenges of poverty, structural violence, failure of governance, ignorance of the officials, corruption, lack of basic amenities, lack of education and health infrastructure, insurgency and conflict of several kinds.

These locations have severe economic and technological deficiencies; development is lagging behind in these areas; and the majority of residents in these areas are tribal, lower caste and economically disadvantaged. In addition to these geographical, demographic, and developmental challenges and constraints, there are other challenges and issues, such as the stereotyping of the marginalised and vulnerable groups or identities in the content of the mainstream media. Examples of this include misrepresentation of the women, Dalits, minorities, ethnic and linguistic minorities, as well as communities in conflict zones. These misrepresentations and stereotyping occurred for a variety of reasons, one of which is the underrepresentation of these identities and marginal communities in the mainstream media ecosystem's workforce. The number of Dalits, tribals, women, ethnic and linguistic minorities, and communities from the periphery is lesser and devastatingly minimal.

As a result, alternative media emerged to balance the disparity created by the mainstream media model and communication ecosystem against marginalised communities and identities. It is primarily focused on the marginalised community in society, such as tribal, Dalit, Minority, and Women, and provides a platform and voice to these groups, identities, and communities.

The current study primarily explores the role, nature, and impact of alternative media in society; to do so, the study investigates the philosophical underpinnings and theoretical grounding to contextualise the alternative media phenomenon in the context of Indian society. The study investigates alternative media conceptions and seeks to create a composite theoretical and conceptual framework in order to explain the various features and dimensions of alternative media and analyse its impact on

society. The study investigates three prominent alternative media platforms, namely **CGNet Swara, Khabar Lahariya, and Video Volunteers**; leading alternative media platform in their formats i.e. respectively audio, print, and audio-visual.

CGNet Swara works primarily for the tribal of the Gondvana region, while Khabar Lahariya identifies women as a marginalised community and works mainly in the Bundelkhand Region, and Video Volunteers works predominantly for the marginalised community living in the rural, remote, and periphery regions. It gives the voice to the ethnic community, the impoverished and deprived community, and minority in Indian society. This study seeks to investigate the role, nature, and impact of alternative media on society through empirical and qualitative interpretation and analysis.

### **Background of the Case Study**

Three well-known leading alternative media platforms from all media format, including print, audio, and audio-visual, have been chosen in order to conduct an academic investigation and exploration of the role, nature, and impact of alternative media. These platforms are listed below.

In print *Khabar Lahariya* has been taken as case study. Khabar Lahariya is an Indian newspaper, published in certain rural dialects of Hindi, including Bundeli Bajjika dialect and Avadhi. The newspaper was started by Nirantar, a New Delhi-based non-government organization which focuses on gender and education. Initially seen as a women-only publication, it now covers local political news, local crime reports, social issues and entertainment, all reported from a feminist perspective. As of September 2012, its total print-run, all editions included, is around 6000 copies; the management claims an estimated readership of 1, 00,000.

In radio or audio, *CGNet Swara* has been taken for the study and CGNet Swara is a renowned and leading organization experimenting with the mobile based radio technology. The effort of the CGNet Swara has been recognized all across the world. CGNet Swara is an Indian voice-based online portal that allows people in the forests of Central Tribal India to report local news by making a phone call. A portal that is freely accessible by a basic mobile phone enables anyone to submit experiences, news and issues and can listen to them by dialing **+91 8050068000**,

getting a call back, and receiving their message in the language they speak, which is typically Gondi and Hindi. On a mobile phone, one can dial 1 to record their message and 2 to hear other people's messages. Reported stories are moderated by journalists and become available for playback online as well as over the phone.

In audio-visual format the *Video Volunteers* has been taken for the study. Video Volunteers is an international media and human rights NGO founded in 2003 that promotes community media to enable citizen participation in marginalized and poor communities around the world. Video Volunteers is a registered non-profit in the state of New York in the US. Video Volunteers was founded in 2003 by Jessica Mayberry after she spent a year as a fellow of the American India Foundation training rural Indian women in filmmaking. Video Volunteers originally operated from offices in New York, NY and Goa, India. Mayberry works closely with co-director Stalin K, Indian documentary filmmaker and community radio activist, as well as original co-founder of Drishti Media, Arts and Human Rights.

### **Significance of the Study**

Alternative media is dynamic academic concept and there are several academic stands on this very concept. There is a need of development of a multi-disciplinary composite theoretical framework which could deal with the notion of alternative media in comprehensive manner. The dimension associated with the operation and execution of alternative media and the distinct nature at the level of structure and operation as well as essence of the alternative media could be explored. This study strive to offer an multidisciplinary composite theoretical and conceptual framework which deals with the various significant dimensions of mass media such as *organizational structure, content production, distribution and consumption pattern, impact on the public sphere, cultural intervention, mobilization and role in the social change.*

This study is exploratory in nature, so it investigates how Alternative media platforms challenge the mainstream media. It also sheds light on the mechanism by which Alternative media intervene in cultural discourse and assert to create Counter Culture and Counter Public Sphere, as well as how it generates Counter Public Groups by establishing Alternative Version of Reality and Narrative. This study strives to contextualize **the emergence of alternative media and its impact on**

**society** particularly in India. This study presents a holistic picture of the present condition of the alternative media in India and provides a critical and analytical body of literature on the situation of the alternative media. The study critically examines the role, nature and impact of the alternative media.

### **Scope of the Research**

This study explores alternative media platforms in all the three major media formats i.e. Print, Audio and Audio-Visual. The study takes three leading and academically acclaimed organizations namely *CGNet Swara, Khabar Lahariya and Video Volunteers* working in the realm of alternative media in the India. This study critically examines the theoretical grounding and maps conceptual background of alternative media as notion and its impact on society. Through the case study this research provides an extensive picture of the context in which alternative media operates in India; this study explores the alternative features which makes alternative media platforms, alternative to the dominant and mainstream media and community system.

The present study sheds light on the process of systematic marginalization of the certain class and section of the society by the mainstream media ecosystem and the role of alternative media in assuring intervention and assertion in the media and communication realm. It provides a comprehensive picture of the transformation in the journalistic practices under the influence of the alternative media platforms. The alternative attributes and elements embedded in the alternative media model responsible for making alternative media platforms an alternative communication system are explored in terms of structure and spirit . The study also provides the critical body of literature referring to the media consumption patterns of the consumers subscribing alternative media platforms and the alternative practices in the realm of content production, distribution and consumption as well as finance, human resource development and interrelation between content producer and consumer.

The present study traces the historical factors causing the emergence of alternative media and provides a trajectory of media development form ancient time to the present age. The study provides a comprehensive picture of the dialectics between mainstream media and alternative media form the very beginning of the media history. It marks the emergence of new media technologies and contextualizes

alternative media in new communication realm and explores the role, nature and impact of the alternative media platform in Indian society. The impact of the alternative media in terms of assertion of the alternative discourse in public sphere and empowering marginal community by extending media democracy to the unheard voices has been also examined critically.

### **Statement of the Problem**

As the Nancy Kranich (2000) views the alternative media platforms “counter balance media system” in the realm of mass media. Atton (1999) argues that alternative media strive to engage marginal and disadvantage community with communication system and strategically ensure appropriate representation, direct participation and active engagement of neglected community, class and sections of the society in the media ecosystem. David Armstrong (1981) while characterizing the alternative media fixes the criteria for being qualified as alternative media; that criteria includes nature of the content, the nature of the organization (recruitment, training, inter-relation within and outside of the organization), the nature of the relation and interaction with the socio-political and cultural system and at last the financial structure, character and aim of the organization. The alternative media platforms are to be examined on the above mentioned parameter to be qualified as alternative platforms and called to be the alternative to the mainstream media.

The present research study appropriately infuses the multi-disciplinary theoretical conception to formulate a comprehensive composite theoretical framework to deal with the phenomenon of emergence of alternative media and through the case study of three key alternative media platforms. *The study strives to critically examine the role, nature and impact of the alternative media and seeks for the exploration and explanation for the “emergence of alternative media and its impact on the society.”*

### **Aim and Objective of the Study**

The aim of the study is to explore the role, nature and impact of the alternative media in the society and shed light on the alternative element embedded in the alternative media. The study also strive for provide an historical, theoretical and contextual account of the emergence of alternative and its impact on society.

**Specifically, the objectives of study are as follows**

1. To contextualize the concept of the alternative media in multidisciplinary conceptual framework
2. To explore the nature of alternative media platforms
3. To analyse the role of the Alternative Media Platforms in the media spheres as well as in society
4. To study the impact of the alternative media platforms on society and media ecosystem
5. To explore the alternative features of alternative media platforms

**Research Questions**

**RQ1:** What are the alternative elements in alternative media platforms?

**RQ2:** How alternative media platforms has emerged as alternative to mainstream media in communication system?

**RQ3:** How are the alternative platforms are impacting the society at large?

**RQ4:** What are the theoretical foundations and philosophical groundings for the contextualization of alternative media platforms in Indian society?

**RQ5:** How do alternative media platforms promotes interest of marginal community and empower them?

**RQ6:** How do the alternative media platforms alter the producer and consumer inter-relation in its operation?

**Research Methodology for the Study**

The study mainly aims to explore the role and nature of alternative media in media ecosystem and its impact on the society. It also seeks for providing an account of its emergence and development of the alternative media. For the fulfillment of the above purpose the present study examines and goes through the primary and secondary data. In the part of examining secondary data goes through the literature available and study the research papers, annual reports of case study alternative media organizations, media coverage, websites, analytics and so on and so forth. Researcher

did the case study of the all three major alternative media platforms namely *CGNet Swara, Khabar Lahariya and Video Volunteers* to explore the alternative practices in the operation and execution of the alternative media ecosystem and how it stands different than the mainstream media ecosystem.

In the part of primary research and in the course of primary data collection, researcher adopts mixed method approach and collects both empirical and qualitative data. For fulfillment of the purpose, researcher has collected data through the survey method from all key stakeholders of media ecosystem i.e. content producers (journalists, contributor), audience (reader, listener subscribers etc.) and the management (founders, key decision maker). Closed ended questionnaire made filled by the audience and the qualitative interviews are conducted with the content producers and founders of the considered alternative media platforms. Semi-structured interview are adopted as tool for the content producers and in-depth interview format is selected for collecting data from founders or key members of the considered case study alternative media organizations.

The questionnaire is designed in a way that it assess three key aspect of the content consumer characteristics; first section, assesses the demographic profile, second section examines the media usage pattern and the third and the last part of the questionnaire seeks for collection of information about the alternative media impact profile (impact of the alternative media on the people consuming the alternative media content). The first two part of the questionnaire aims to collect information about how community members consuming alternative media content and pattern of uses of the media technologies as well as their demographic configuration; to have a general understanding of the impact of the alternative media on the audience.

The research has taken sample size of 500 for each case study. For CGNet Swara the universe of the sample collection is Surajpur district, Chhattisgarh, for Khabar Lahariya the universe is Chitrakoot district, Uttar Pradesh and for the Video volunteers the universe is the database of the active users group of the video volunteers. Surajpur district, Chhattisgarh for is taken for CGNet Swara because CGNet Swara has strong hold and audience base as well as local support in this district and Chitrakoot district, Uttar Pradesh for Khabar Lahariya is taken as it has its headquarter in this district and has deep penetrated reader base and support in this

district. For the video volunteers those users has been selected who has been excellently active over the video volunteers network and regularly take part in on-ground activity and campaign as well.

The purposive sampling technique is used for the collection of data and for the interpretation of the qualitative interviews the thematic analysis and narrative analysis is used as the tool of analysis. The data collected through the consumer's base of respective organizations is illustrated in different statistical representation tools such as graphs, pie charts, bar charts etc. and through the tabulations and descriptive statistical tool empirical data are shown and interpreted.

### **Research Design of the Study**

Following are the details of the research design adopted for collecting and interpreting data and dealing with the research question of the study. It is the plan of investigation for the research problem of the study.

- **Universe of the study**
  - **Surajpur District, Chhattisgarh for the CGNet Swara**
  - **Chitrakoot District, Uttar Pradesh for Khabar Lahariya**
  - **Active Users Database of the Video Volunteers**
- **Sample of the study**

The sample for the study comprised 500 respondents form each of the considered case study organization namely CGNet Swara, Khabar Lahariya and Video Volunteers. For the CGNet Swara Surajpur District, Chhattisgarh, for khabar Lahariya Chitrakoot district, Uttar Pradesh and for the Video volunteers active user's database is taken as universe. For the selection of the respondents the response rate, engagements and participation is taken as selection criteria. In order to evaluate impact of the alternative media platforms qualitative interviews (for the contributor's Semi-structured interviews of 10 content producers (journalist and contributors) of each organization and 2 In-depth Interviews of founders or key decision makers form each organizations) is taken so that the impact of the alternative media on the life of the contributors and narratives of the founders could be analyzed.

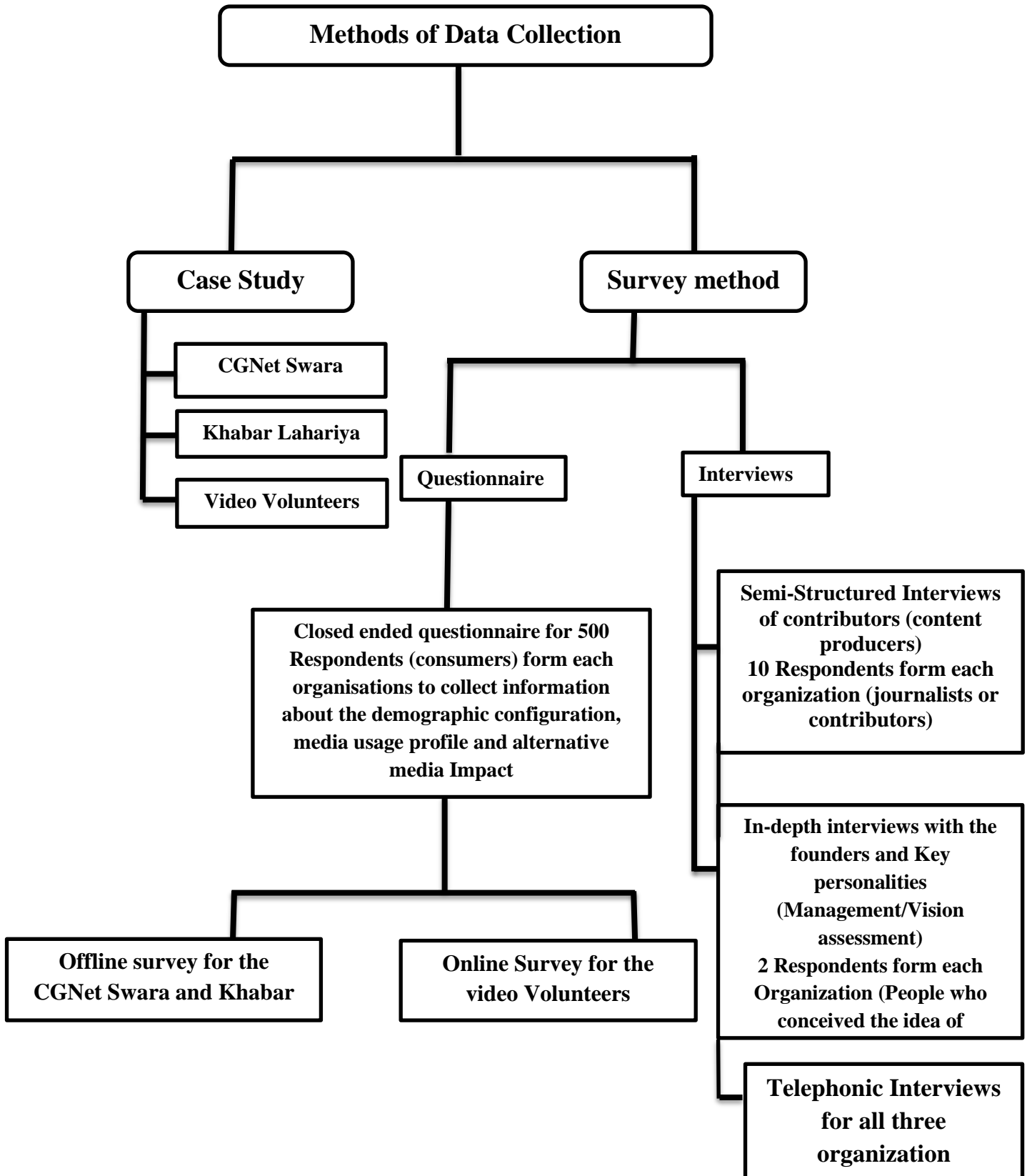
- **Unit of the Study : Individual**

- **Sample size:** 500 for each organization (consumer of CGNet Swara, Khabar Lahariya and Video Volunteers)
- **Sampling technique:** The sample was selected through the non-probability sampling method applying purposive sampling technique.
- **Nature of the Study:** The study is predominantly exploratory in nature.
- **Methods of Investigation:** The present study adopts following research methods for the academic investigation of the research problem of the study.
  - **Historical:** To explore the historical trajectory of the emergence of alternative media. The research as considered the account of the development of the different format of the media and considered the study, theory and concepts propounded by the media scholars and historians.
  - **Description:** The study describes the structural, operational and essential dimensions of case study alternative media platforms and contextualizes it in the context of Indian society.
  - **Comparison:** The study also comparative analysis as the research methods and compare the data collected form respective organizations as well as with the mainstream media ecosystem and dominant communication system.
  - **Observation:** The observation is also adopted as the research method in the study to access the general interpretation and understating of the distinctive features of respective organization operation and execution.
- **Tool of data collection:** Close Ended questionnaire and Interviews (Semi-structured and In-depth Interviews)

- **Tool of Analysis:** *Descriptive statistical analysis* tool is adopted for the analysis of the data collected through the respondents for each organization ( 500 form each thus 1500 in total) and for analyzing qualitative interviews *thematic analysis* and *narrative analysis* is applied as the tool of analysis in the present study.

**Presentation of the Data:** for the presentation of the *data graphs, Pie Charts, Bar-charts, tables* etc. have been used. Descriptive statistical parameters such as *percentage, cumulative percentage, range* and so on and so forth has been used. *MS excel* and *SPSS* software is used for processing the data and preparing the graphs, charts and tables.

### Illustration of Methods of Data Collection Plan



## **Plan of Chapters**

There are eight chapter in the present study and are mentioned below.

- **Chapter-1 (Introduction)**

This chapter addresses the fundamental concepts and characteristics of alternative media and serves as an introduction to the topic. It describes the historical and developmental trajectory of mass media from print through convergent new media. It explores several communication systems in the field of mass media. It demonstrates how mass media institutions perform multiple roles in society and have the virtues of social, political, and cultural institutions. This chapter discusses the fundamental contrast between mainstream media and alternative media, as well as the dynamics of alternative media with the power system. In addition, the chapter describes the research methodology and research design used in the current study.

- **Chapter-2 (Literature Review)**

The chapter conducts a review of literature and conduct a critical examination of the literature available in the field of alternative media. This chapter covers the relevant literature on the micro and macro functioning, structure, and impact of alternative media in society. By shedding light on broad media theories, this chapter also provides a theoretical and philosophical framework for comprehending and interpreting alternative media discourse. The scholarship on ideology, mass media and power dynamics, and its role in social transformation is highlighted and presented in this chapter. It aims to connect earlier substantial work in alternative media studies.

- **Chapter-3 (Theoretical Framework)**

This chapter provides a broad and thorough framework for investigating the processes and phenomena of alternative media. In order to comprehend the notion, it comprises both empirical and methodological scientific components as well as socio-economic and societal ramifications. This chapter has covered the exclusivity of mainstream media and the attempts made by alternative media to close the gap. In a brief discussion, the influence of technology intervention on the communication system and the ensuing effects on the communication scenario has also been covered. The

power structure and other socio-political and cultural issues that affect the communication system and social order are also covered.

This chapter examined the multifaceted discourse around the idea of alternative and mainstream media and provided a critical analysis of the argument that alternative media work is different from that of the mainstream. The chapter provides a convergent theoretical and conceptual viewpoint on alternative media and its dynamics in a formal academic setting.

- **Chapter-4 (Case Study of CGNet Swara)**

This chapter provides a general understanding of the case study, i. e. CGNet Swara, and discusses the work, role and impact it is having in the region in particular and in the media space in general. This chapter is a brief overview of the CGNet Swara and a sort of profile of the type, structure and communications system adopted for the creation of an innovative media system in a place as difficult as the tribal areas of Chhattisgarh.

- **Chapter-5 (Case Study of Khabar Lahariya)**

The situation of women in the media, as well as Khabar Laharia's feminist media intervention program, are all thoroughly studied and addressed in this chapter, which details the case study of Khabar Lahariya. This chapter goes into great length into the organisational structure, functioning, and execution of the Khabar Lahariya, as well as its involvement with and effects on society.

- **Chapter-6 (Case Study of Video Volunteers)**

This chapter provides an account of Video Volunteer as case study. It examines the initiatives, campaigns, and actions of the video volunteers in great detail. Additionally, it explores the phenomena of the rise of mobile as a media platform, analyses how it affects the journalistic paradigm, and provides a sneak glimpse at academic research on the subject.

- **Chapter-7 (Data Interpretation and Analysis)**

The analysis of the data collected is provided in this chapter, along with an interpretation of it. Additionally, by focusing on the essential players in the media

system—contributors, consumers, and owners or major decision-makers of the media outlet—it aims to analyze the influence of alternative media on society and throw light on the findings.

- **Chapter-8 ( Conclusion and Generalizations)**

On the basis of the facts and outcomes, this chapter attempts to draw a broad conclusion about the research subject.

### **Conclusions**

The present study investigated the theoretical and conceptual background and looks at the role, nature, and impact of alternative media. The interactions and dynamics between the three main stakeholders—the content creators, contributors, and management (founders, key decision-makers)—are primarily taken into account to explore the role, nature, and impact of alternative media in their lives in order to draw conclusions about its impacts on society as a whole.

Alternative media outlets in contemporary society fill the gap left by the mainstream media's lack of coverage of the underprivileged. The study demonstrates how mainstream media ignores the issues, concerns, and challenges of marginalized communities and focuses instead on the upper, upper middle, and elite classes of society. The content and services of the mainstream media protect and promote the culture and social order that favour the status quo and foster a capitalist and consumerist culture; alternative media were created to challenge the dominant system, communication order, power structure, and socio-political dynamics. Alternative media was created with the intention of defending the rights and entitlements of the marginalised community living in rural and remote areas of the nation; it organises, trains, and gives them the fundamental competence and confidence to participate actively in the communication system and intervene democratically to exercise the right to communicate and reap the benefits of the guaranteed equality and equity defined in the constitution.

The alternative media platform implements innovation mechanisms at every stage of operation and execution to challenge the dominant communication system and make the alternative media ecosystem more inclusive, interactive, dynamic, and effective for the underserved population. This innovation makes the alternative media

platform, an alternative to the mainstream media at every level, from defining editorial policy and strategy to disseminating the finished product (media content) to the masses (targeted audience, underserved population). It utilises alternative mechanisms for producing content, hiring and training employees, operating networks, and managing the organisation at every level. It also ensures the maximum participation of the people for whom it works. It aims to ensure community engagement in the operation and execution of alternative media platforms in every course of action, whether it is topic selection, content generation and distribution, or administration of the organisation at every level.

As an essential requirement and fundamental feature, alternative media must have an exclusive focus on marginalised communities and identities, a participatory content production and distribution mechanisms, economic sustainability, inclusivity in all areas of operation and execution, and community organising and engagement for democratic participation in the debate, discourse, and communication system must be there in alternative media. Alternative media emerged as a distinct media model from the mainstream media because it fundamentally promotes civil rights, community culture, linguistic identity, and autonomy; advocates for nature conservation; and represents the interests and concerns of the marginalised and disadvantaged people.

The distinction between alternative media and mainstream media can be seen at a number of different levels, including how alternative media approach organisational structure, operation, and execution, targeted audience, hiring and training procedures, funding sources and business models, commercial imperatives, and market orientation. These distinct features that set alternative media apart from mainstream media include the use of technological infrastructure that is economically feasible, innovative, and convergent; adoption and promotion of the horizontal communication order within organisations and in society at large; production of content intended to challenge the society's predominate political and cultural values and order; and self-reliance.

These key traits and attributes are integrated into the *CGNet Swara, Khabar Lahariya, and Video Volunteers* case study alternative media platforms. These alternative media platforms are tested and investigated on the fundamental parameter

and grounds in the study and discovered adopting alternative mechanism at the level of training, recruitment, operation and execution of the organisation, promotion of the marginal community interest and concerns, target audience, funding sources and financial structure, and on other dimensions it seems to be different than the mainstream media and emerges as alternative media platform.

The study has established the idea that alternative media is an alternative to mainstream media because it incorporates a distinct and unique vision and strategy that causes it to emerge as an alternative to the mainstream media at a basic level and possibly in all dimensions and levels.

The overall influence of alternative media on society is to provide power to the weak, disregarded, disadvantaged, and marginalised communities or sections of society. Provide coverage and address concerns and problems in geographical areas that are overlooked by the mainstream media due to structural prejudice and other factors. By equipping marginal communities with the instrument and platform of the media and communication, alternative media seeks to counter structural imbalance and power divide.

These actions and endeavours in the society make democracy dynamic, inclusive, and participatory. The underprivileged and disadvantaged community and people retain their confidence and hope in the society and its system and tend to engage democratically in it by using media and communication tools and platforms to voice their concerns, which eventually lead to social change for the better. Alternative media work to democratise the public sphere and communication system, which gives marginal community members a sense of being acknowledged and heard by the society and strengthens bonds in the society. This balance in representation adds multiple interpretations of reality and enriches the democracy as well as provides the sense of content to the disadvantaged and marginal communities.

Looking at the general impact of alternative media on society, we may say that, while it is minor, it is still noticeable and strives to challenge and question the established structure and order, promoting inclusive social change. Because they influence culture and form the social structure of society, the mainstream media has all of the problems and constraints that the mainstream and dominant segment of society has; they produce the dominant culture of society. Alternative media, on the

other hand, works to balance society's power and structural imbalances by opposing and adopting alternative processes in the media and communication spheres.

### **Limitation of the Study**

The researcher has made every effort to cover every aspect and dimension required to investigate the role, makeup, and impact of alternative media, but it's inevitable that some may have been overlooked for a variety of factors. An ethnographic account of the members of the community involved with or consuming the content of the alternative media may be the study's one of the limitation.

The focus of the study is on the producers, consumers, and managers of alternative media content and organization and its corresponding impact on the life of the community members, for which these organization are working and on society as whole; an account of the general public and their perspectives on alternative media might have been included in this study but due to a lack of financial resources and circumstances relating to COVID-19, this two-dimension has been left for future research and could not be addressed in the present research study.