

# **“Public Perception of Credibility: A Comparative Study of Citizen Journalism and Professional Journalism”**

Submitted for the partial fulfillment of the Masters Degree in Journalism and Mass Communication



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## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that **Megha Soni** has successfully completed the dissertation titled " Public Perception of Credibility: A Comparative Study of Citizen Journalism and Professional Journalism" under the supervision of **Dr. Dhiraj Shukla** as part of the requirements for the fulfilment of M.A in Journalism and Mass Communication at Guru Ghasidas University Bilaspur (C.G). The work presented by the student is original to the best of my knowledge and also been conducted in accordance with the ethical standards and guidelines set forth by the university.

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### Introduction

The landscape of journalism has undergone a profound transformation in recent years, primarily driven by the advent of digital technologies and the widespread adoption of social media. Traditionally, journalism has been the preserve of professional journalists working within established media organizations, adhering to stringent codes of ethics, rigorous editorial processes, and a strong commitment to accuracy and impartiality. These standards have historically underpinned the credibility of the news produced by such organizations, earning the trust of the public and serving as a cornerstone of democratic societies. However, the rise of the internet and social media platforms has given birth to a new form of journalism: citizen journalism. This phenomenon has empowered ordinary individuals to produce and disseminate news content, often bypassing the traditional gatekeepers of information. With smartphones and social media at their disposal, citizen journalists can report on events in real-time, offering unfiltered perspectives that are often absent from mainstream media coverage. While this democratization of information has been praised for giving voice to the voiceless and enabling a more participatory form of journalism, it has also raised significant concerns about the credibility of the information being shared.

Credibility is a central concept in the practice of journalism, encompassing the perceived trustworthiness, reliability, and accuracy of the information being reported. It is the foundation upon which the relationship between the media and the public is built. When credibility is compromised, the very function of journalism as a watchdog and a source of reliable information is undermined. Therefore, understanding how the public perceives the credibility of different forms of journalism is crucial, especially in an era where misinformation and fake news are rampant. While professional journalism has long been associated with credibility due to its adherence to established standards and practices, the credibility of citizen journalism is more contested. Citizen journalism is often perceived as being less reliable due to the absence of formal training, editorial oversight, and accountability mechanisms. However, it is also valued for its immediacy, authenticity, and the diversity of perspectives it offers. This duality presents a challenge: How does the public perceive the credibility of citizen journalism in comparison to professional journalism? Are there specific factors that influence these perceptions, and how do they differ between the two forms of journalism?