



# Media Discourse and Society

Volume 1, Issue 1, Fall 2025

ISSN (P): 3106-6453 & ISSN (E): 3106-6461

Homepage: <https://journal.vu.edu.pk/MDS>

A publication of

Department of Mass Communication

Virtual University of Pakistan



**Title:** Female Journalists in Pakistan: A Study of Gender Discrimination in Media Organizations

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**Citation:** Sarwar, A. (2025). *Female journalists in Pakistan: A study of gender discrimination in media organizations*. Media Discourse and Society, Vol: 1(1), 46–65.

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**Conflict of Interest:** Author (s) declared no conflict of interest

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# **Female Journalists in Pakistan: A Study of Gender Discrimination in Media Organizations**

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## **Abstract**

Organizations are arranged around two major human resource, male and female. Media industry is one sector in which the two genders work together in a common work environment. Nevertheless, female journalists face a lot of issues and discrimination, and it is commonly believed that they cannot overcome the phenomenon of glass ceiling. Moreover, the concept of the sticky floor is linked to women in the workforce where women are likely to have a negative vertical mobility in the promotion ladder despite the frequent horizontal movements across jobs. With the burdens of family and childcare, sexism, discrimination, and women seem not to have enough organizational support to overcome the situation, not to mention that it may deter and even negate their willingness to stay in the journalism profession. The study seeks to examine the prejudice of female journalists in the Pakistani media by survey, which is quantitative research method. The sample that was collected was seventy five samples gathered using a convenience sampling method. The print and electronic media have identical problems. The gender-based inequalities that face the female journalists in Pakistan are the gender wage difference, disparity in the working assignment of various gender, lack of opportunities, not giving adequate training opportunities, biased promotional policies, and gender-based behaviors within the working environment.

**Key Words:** Discrimination, Female Journalists, Media Organizations, Organizational Support, Work Environment, Empowerment

## Introduction

The society is playing a key role in the creation and perpetuation of gender-based inequalities. Gender does not merely get learnt during basic level of socialization but instead, human beings internalize gender expectations in their lives and also adapt to evolving norms in their surroundings. Since childhood, boys and girls are taught to perceive themselves in the terms of biological sex. The construction of masculinity and femininity identities is very embedded in culture. Such divide is created early in life as an example, girls are usually taught to be concerned about their looks and to act in a manner that can be noticed, boys on the other hand are taught to be assertive and take control of their environment either through power or ability. Children are always observing how other people do gender and such exposure repeatedly on the behaviors of gender- segregated strengthens the assumption that such differences are natural or biologically determined. In organizations, the interaction and opportunity are influenced by two major networks of gender male and female. Information industry is one such sector where men and women have to work together regardless of their contributions. Nonetheless, unequal power relations are still one of the characteristics of media institutions and homophily patterns of associating with individuals like oneself still showcase gender boundaries (Ibarra, 1992). Despite women being a vital constituent of the labor force, journalism has traditionally been considered as a man oriented occupation. It is a common understanding that female journalists find it hard to crack the glass ceiling, a cloud that cannot be examined to make them get to the highest levels of leadership. Also, women tend to face the so-called sticky floor, meaning that they are kept on the lower levels of the organization with little possibility of promotion up the hierarchy, despite the frequent horizontal mobility. The latter are particularly apparent in electronic media. Though the number of women on the screen has been increasing with the rapid expansion of television channels privately, they still are not receiving equal attention and recognition. Although female reporters in developed nations also have to deal with the same challenges, women reporters in Pakistan are still comparatively at the initial stage of their professional empowerment. The growth of the private TV channels in Pakistan

has largely contributed to the growth of women in the newsrooms and on-air programs. Special correspondents, anchors and reporters of female form are now regulars in the mainstream news and current affairs programs. They tend to be perceived as a fashionable, successful people who set the trends in fashion and presentation. A prominent instance is that of Rabia Mehmood of the Lahore bureau of Express 24/7 who was recognized by the international Women media foundation as international. She earned the 11 th Elizabeth Neuffer Fellowship an award presented every year to excellent female journalists in the print, broadcast, and digital sector in their pursuit of human rights and the issues of social justice. During her career, Mehmood has reported on influential pieces that were to do with the freedom of expression, political turmoil, terrorism, and the plight of marginalized groups. She reports on the victims and survivors of militant assaults in Lahore and internally displaced people (IDPs) who are displaced due to the conflicts in Northwestern Pakistan between insurgency forces and the state forces.

## 2. Problem Statement

The study aims to examine the types of discrimination against women journalists who work in Pakistani media houses. To attain this, the research shall use survey and in-depth interviews by asking specific questions that will help identify the nature and the scope of the problem. The general aim is to find out and examine the reasons that lead to inequality in treatment of women in the journalistic profession.

### 2.1 Objectives of the Study

The primary objectives of this research include:

- To evaluate the level of wage inequality between male and female journalists in the Islamabad/Rawalpindi region.
- To examine whether work assignments differ on the basis of gender.
- To explore how gender-based discrimination affects employees' professional lives and well-being.
- To investigate promotion practices and assess women journalists' access to leadership and management roles.
- To identify the various forms of discriminatory behavior women encounter in media organizations.

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- To identify the various forms of discriminatory behavior women encounter in media organizations.

### 3. Literature Review

According to the Encyclopedia of Journalism, journalism has always been a male activity (p. 98). Sterling (2009) also indicates that women were in the past not encouraged to join the field. Over the past few years, nevertheless, a greater number of women have entered journalism, in part due to the fact that they tend to be, or are supposed to be, satisfied, or even required, with lower salaries than men.

Report by International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) at the UNESCO 1995 conference Women in the Media: Access to Expression and Decision-Making (Toronto, 1995) indicated that even after years of research on the dissatisfaction that women have been having with their representation in the media, little change has been witnessed that is of any significance. It was found in the report that women are still grossly under-represented and where they do feature, they are mostly portrayed in secondary and cliched roles.

In addition to the educational records, experience and technical expertise, Nikala (2000) asserts that women who work part-time in the world societies receive lower salary packages. This means that there are other variables that dictate the difference between the salary of males and females, more so because of the behavior and policies of the management of the media organization. There are many restrictions related to gender discrimination of female journalists including lack of support with child caring, rigid working conditions, and poor training. All this slows down the career advancement of women and serves as a hindrance, which damages education and acquisition of skills, which in turn hamper their career ladder. Media companies tend to regard part-time female employees in a negative light, and such a negative perception becomes a hindrance in their career progress.

In a study carried out by The Guardian in the United Kingdom, it is shown that the newspaper journalism profession remains massively male dominated. Based on its findings, 74% of news reporters are men and women are still grossly underrepresented in top editorial positions. The research also shows that in almost all the major newspapers, there is presence of women journalists in almost 30 percent.

The head of the investigation Rowenna Davis (2011) claimed that these statistics create a problem with the notion that journalism is a merit based industry. She highlighted that this severe underrepresentation in hard news leads one to question whether having no female voices in news coverage impacts the framing and content of news.

There is also a significant amount of literature that indicates that regardless of their equal qualifications and professional abilities, women journalists are still prone to be placed in lower

management or less powerful positions. Most of the media organizations show little initiative to incorporate women in new programs or high profile projects. Even well-trained young women with the potential of international or high-level employment usually get low-level or junior level managerial jobs.

The study conducted by Habib (2000) examined the existence of the barriers of brick wall and glass ceiling facing Pakistani women journalists. He used the model of survey of the U.S. Merit System Protection Board adopted in Naff (1994) to study motivation and discrimination patterns at the workplace. The findings of his type showed a high degree of gender discrimination at the bottom of the hierarchical structure and top-level management in media houses. The cultural and social pressure stood out as the greatest hindrances to women access and advancements in journalism. Gender discrimination based on market further discriminated the professional growth of women. In spite of the existing government policies, they were mostly ineffective. Habib also discovered that women of upper-class were subjected to relatively less discrimination. In general, this kind of treatment hurt the morale, motivation and work performance of female journalists.

The next theory is the gender discrimination bias theory developed by Susan and colleagues (1998), according to which senior managers might be involved in discriminatory actions when they think that the female employees can be a threat to their professional positions. Their study revealed that the discriminatory attitudes were prevalent at upper organizational levels as opposed to junior levels. Most workers discriminated against females, especially the top-level media jobs. Their results indicated that journalists tend to give more consideration to consumer demands rather than their own taste. Even though the percentage of discrimination was not that high as in the past decades, media houses were still able to show their support of gender-biased actions, which implies that the external pressure, instead of an internal change, had an effect.

Hiau (2006) analyzed wage difference among the various income brackets in media institutions. He used quantile regression to identify a solid indicator of glass ceiling in the private media industry in Australia, but the public sector provided more accommodating environments to the family. In the course of his research, he came to the conclusion that the wage gaps between men and women were partly based on the stereotypical assumptions regarding the character of men and women.

Sabir (2007) explored the problem of inequality in the remuneration between genders by using the data collected in 1996/97 and 2006/2007 in Pakistan. The research concluded that women journalists had more opportunities through recent economic growth, although the growth increased the gender wage gap. Sabir has used mean and quantile regression method to show that wage inequalities varied among salary scales. The results of both processes were similar, with a reduction in the gap at the top of the scale and the minimum in the lower-middle section.

The growing participation of women in journalism has also impacted on the joining of unions and media associations. A study conducted by IFJ on the involvement of females indicated that women were 28.75 percent of union membership with a disproportionate representation in administrative positions in comparison to media decision making positions in general. Nevertheless, women constituted 17 percent of the total members of media unions in the world. Although some unions have also left behind the old male club mentality, many have not.

The Association of Television Journalists (ATJ) in Pakistan are approximately 700 members with only about 50 being women among them- half of which are located in Karachi. A great number of women reporters are anchors, talk show hosts or reporters in regional languages, Urdu and English. Nevertheless, they receive lower wages than their male counterparts when they do the same job and have to work extra hard to secure high profile jobs. Entrance into the profession is not structurally clear to many and lower-middle-class students tend to have low confidence which predisposes them to manipulation or intimidation by media employers.

According to Feroz Gul, a journalist based in Karachi, women who are commonly referred to as the weaker sex, are faced with greater challenges in a male dominated world. Such issues are complicated by women that have less or marginalized backgrounds. Despite the gender equality paints that are argued by the United Nations and policies that are established by the global development programs, there are still massive challenges.

Hassan (2008) notes that although discrimination based on gender takes place all over the world, the Pakistani women journalists are further constrained by the lack of equal access to psychological, educational and professional opportunities. These problems are aggravated in conservative or rural areas where women usually are faced with aggressive behaviors and lack of facilities. Even with the demanding assignments they undergo, they are often not noticed and given less rewards and networking opportunities.

Siddiqui (2004) has claimed that there exist gender inequalities in media organisations depending on the territories, which are shaped by local practices, society classes and patriarchal cultures. Social structures such as tribal, feudal and male-centered were determined to be key contributors of discriminatory behavior. Despite the equality of rights provided by Islam to men and women, the society in Pakistan has a tendency to go against such values and practices, which are the cause of discrimination of women as journalists in their occupations. To overcome such problems, Siddiqui suggested the increased state participation and awareness campaigns with the society.

Mehak (2007) studied gender discrimination in Pakistani media houses and discovered that although women had been found to attain higher education levels, their effort was not commensurate. Women education increased the chances of being quickly absorbed into journalism and those with personal transportation had a better job chance. Nonetheless, the likelihood of women having small children to work was extremely reduced.

Subsequent investigations reveal that women are more discriminated than men in personal and professional aspects such as lack of necessary training as well as the not being offered prestigious assignments. Lane (2000) discovered that the lack of childcare support, lack of training and the inflexible working hours, prevent the development of women career and narrow the career possibilities available to women. On the same note Eatzaz (2007) pointed out that in addition to education, experience and training are among the major factors that determine wage. But by his results, there was no significant discrimination based on gender in promotions and there was no obvious glass ceiling in both the public and the private sectors.

#### 4. Theoretical Framework

##### 4.1 Gender Inequality and Patriarchy Theories.

The concept of patriarchy is the most effective way of explaining gender discrimination within the family and professional setting. Women in the Western societies over centuries had recognised the relationship between gender inequality and patriarchy as one of the primary reasons behind their low status. The patriarchal systems not only deprived women of their own identity but they also subjected them to circumstances that were almost similar to servitude over generations. In the late 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, the efforts of women started to bear tangible fruits, and in the United Kingdom, they were able to receive some legal and political rights. By the eve of the mid-20th century, the focus was slowly shifting towards achieving socio-economic equality rather than rights and identity. Towards the 1960s, the women movement started to more and more conclude that the institutions of patriarchy had a systematic exploitation of women. Although it is commonly believed that women have become equal to men even in the 21st century, contradictions still exist, since women still face different types of male dominance in the society.

#### 4.2 Gender Role Theories

Gender roles can be explained as the prescriptions and beliefs that are socially and culturally defined concerning behaviors and feeling of men and women (Anselmi & Law, 1998, p. 195). Many researchers believe that the perception of sex-based roles determines the basis of development of gender identity. Some of the major psychological views on gender roles and identity formation are evolutionary theory, object-relations theory, gender schema theory, and social role theory. Gender development through evolution approaches is based on genetic reasons of variations between man and woman. The functionalist Shields (1975) asserts that male and female have developed differently in order to play their own, but complementary roles, needed to survive. Similarly, sociobiologist Buss (1995) asserts that behavioral differences between the two sexes arise because of evolutionary sexual and reproductive innovations intended to enhance the greatest reproductive success and parenting of genes.

Object-relations theorists, on the contrary, emphasize the role of socialization in the formation of gender. As an example, Chodorow (1989) stresses the importance of women as the key caregivers in the formation of sex differences. He claims that the initial role of the mother-child emotional attachment is different to boys and girls; boys need to separate with their mothers in order to develop masculine identity, girls do not need to do the same to develop their feminine identity. Chodorow asserts that the low position of women is because the process of separation experienced by boys is difficult as they lose the feminine role. Another significant viewpoint is the Gender Schema Theory (Bem, 1981), which is concentrated on the interaction of cognitive systems and socialization. According to this theory, children internalize the societal meaning of male and female roles and hold onto it as a gender schema, which is subsequently a dominant belief system in their thinking. The perceptions and interpretations of children observed as they notice men and women around them are the results of the cross-relationship between these gender schemas and their life experiences.

#### 5. Research Questions

The research aims to address some fundamental questions pertaining to the experiences of women, as a result of the media industry in Pakistan. It analyses the extent to which female media practitioners are facing gender-based discrimination and explores whether discrimination is more rampant in print, electronic or wire media. The other important theme



as a research question is that women who are employed in the media itself feel like they are being discriminated against because of their gender. The paper also explores the problem of whether professional training is a challenge that women in the media industry face in Pakistan and seeks to learn the general percentage of women in the industry who are employed as journalists. It further examines whether women feel dissuaded in the working environment or lack of facilities and whether the journalistic organisations do anything to enhance and support the welfare and progress of female journalists.

## 6. Methodology

### 6.1 Methodological Design

The chapter provides the description of methodology and the statistical tools that are employed in the gathering and analysis of the data. The research methodology is a quantitative one, based on a multi-questionnaire to gather the data. The questionnaire was used to measure attitudes and perceptions using a Likert scale along with close ended questions with reference to female journalists. The responses in the Likert scale were assigned numerical values and all the questions were coded in SPSS to be analyzed. The information was then given into the program after which the data were produced using the statistical processing of the data in SPSS.

### 6.2 Population and Sampling Method.

The study is anchored on a well stipulated population and sampling process. The wider universe of the research is that of journalists in Pakistan as a whole whereas the target population is the women journalists in the capital of the Islamic world, Islamabad. Out of this group, women who were employed in different media industries in the city formed the sample. One hundred individuals were used who were approached and mailed questionnaires and seventy-five respondents responded to the survey out of whom seven were in the electronic media and the remaining seventy-five individuals in the print media. The data was collected in an efficient way by using convenience sampling, and the researcher would go to individual newspapers, television channels, press clubs, the Associated Press of Pakistan and several locations in Islamabad to obtain responses. The results are found to be important since a sample of seventy-five respondents is large enough to assume normal distribution, which would then be able to make an accurate estimation of the population at large.

### 6.3 Key Variables

The paper concentrates on some of the main variables that can be used to illustrate the experiences of women in the media. Female journalists or female media correspondents are described as a professional who works on such tasks as collection of information about the events, writing articles, editing news materials and performing the functions of a reporter. Gender-biased culture is one of the key variables that mean that there is a belief that a certain gender is intrinsically superior or more dominant than the other gender. In most of the situations, males are seen as inherently better, whereas females are seen as less competent, which remains popular in the media sector. It is a type of discrimination, which is expressed

during the recruitment of staff, higher posts are allocated and even the remuneration scales whereby male staff is mostly favored.

Beat assigning is another significant variable and it is a term used in the journalism to refer to the process of assigning a particular subject region or topic to a reporter to report. The beat reporters have a duty of consistently patrolling and reporting on their designated fields be it crime, politics, sports or any other field. These are usually assigned by the Chief Editor or the senior editorial personnel, and the journalists are supposed to cover the events or incidences dealing with the assigned beat.

Workplace harassment is a key variable as well and it is any kind of psychological or physical pressure, intimidation or threat to a female journalist. This harassment can either be in form of phone calls, text messaging, emails, face to face interaction or any other medium of communication. Another variable is training opportunities and includes professional guidance and instruction which assist women journalists in learning more and better performing their duties. Such training can be associated with different fields of reporting or news production. Salary is the amount of money that female journalists are paid to work, and medical facility is the type of health benefits that can be obtained by the female journalists in the times of illness or medical necessity.

#### 6.4 Questionnaire based Data collection.

The information used in this research was collected among seventy-five female journalists who are employed in various media houses in Islamabad. The questionnaires were filled and recorded via the face-to-face response. The reason behind the choice of 75 sample size was to provide statistically reliable results and normality. The random sampling method was used to select the journalists who took part in the study. All the responses were coded and entered in SPSS to be analyzed once collected. The ordinal level of measurement was utilized because the questions asked in the questionnaires might be ranked or ordered hence the category of the data needed to be precisely determined.

### 7. Results and Findings

The data was interpreted using descriptive statistics and conclusions drawn concerning the larger population based on the sample collected. There are a number of significant observations that were made during the analysis. As the total number of journalists is relatively high, the convenient sampling method was selected due to the practicality. A total number of 75 respondents took part in the study and questionnaires that were returned were all valid and could be used in the analysis. All the answers were correctly documented and typed so that the amount of viable cases was kept at seventy-five. Both these chosen statistical methods allowed presenting the results in a clear manner.

The summary statistics show that 53.3 percent of the respondents were in the Urdu medium organization and 46.7 percent were in the English medium media outlets. The questionnaire was deliberately passed to female journalists in both Urdu and English media so that the study would be able to get realistic and complete insights. The questionnaire was also translated to Urdu to help ease the comprehension process and reduce chances of misinterpretation since most of the participants were able to understand the questions and answer them correctly. It was not specified in the distribution process whether the media was

provided or not; rather, questionnaires were distributed randomly to female reporters who work in different newspapers and news channels so that the sample was diverse and representative.

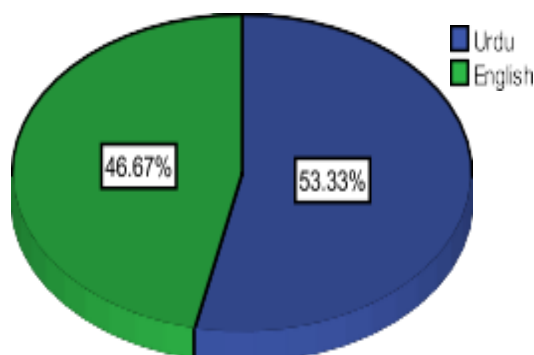


Figure.1

The sample will include respondents of Urdu-medium media houses as well as English-media houses. About 53 percent of the total sampled was randomly picked and the remaining 47 percent were female journalists who had worked in Urdu media. The questionnaires were issued in a balanced manner among both the print and electronic media professionals and 38 respondents were received by the electronic media and 37 respondents by the print media. According to the information obtained with the help of the questionnaires, it became clear that, in one way or another, the media is a contributor to the gender-based discrimination. The results are based on the responses made by the sampled journalists, as a reflection of their experience and perception among the gender issues in the media industry.

RQ1. Do female media professionals feel they are discriminated against on the gender basis?

As the analyzed data shows, most of the respondents expressed their agreement with the idea of being treated equally at the workplace, still, a smaller percentage disagreed and indicated that they experienced discrimination. According to the findings, 42.7 percent of female journalists who were asked not to agree with the statement that gender discrimination prevails in their workplace. Also, 24 percent of respondents agreed that they do not receive equal treatment in the workplace as their male colleagues. According to some of the participants, female journalists are not treated equally, whereas some of them believed that they are treated equally to their male colleagues.

Based on this preliminary examination, it can be concluded that there are several female reporters who feel that gender discrimination is still present in the media sector. Male reporters seem to be given more significance and women reporters feel that they are given lesser chances of undertaking worthwhile and high profile work.

Moreover, the discussion reveals that one-third of the female journalists responded that gender bias has any influence on the distribution of work assignments. Although most of

them refuted this assumption, there was a considerable percentage of people who believed in this particular assumption, indicating that there might be gender-based inclinations by the owners and top people who allocate job assignments.

### Allocation Injustice

Based on the 2005 Global Media Monitoring Project report, which is entitled *More Women in Media: The Way Forward*, by Margaret Gallagher, the media is often viewed as an inappropriate profession by women in such cultures as Pakistan. There is a common mentality in the society about the women employed in media houses, and most families feel that women are not respected in the profession. This makes them likely to deter or even disallow their female family members to engage in a media career. The women do encounter many barriers and limitations that are set up by their respective families before they even step into the media business. Although the world and the technological progress are advanced, journalism is not a high-ranking profession that women are popular to.

Most of the female journalists claimed assignments are assigned according to gender. Women are usually given other minor and non-critical jobs and are seldom given priority assignments. They are usually viewed as the softer sex and their roles are adapted to suit them. There is minimal opportunity to report on hard news or a breaking story on-site such as live coverage. Rather, female journalists are even more frequently engaged in writing side stories, documentaries, and other content that shows off their talents and skills. Their opportunities to develop new skills and have wider experience are limited by such gender-based practices of assigning them. Most superiors believe that women reporters are not capable of working equally well with their male counterparts and are hence inappropriate when tasked with tasks of high priority.

It was established that many of the respondents in both the print and electronic media felt that gender discrimination has been present in Pakistani media houses. The analysis also brought out that female journalists believe that they are not granted equal chances to work on high profile assignments as well as access professional training.

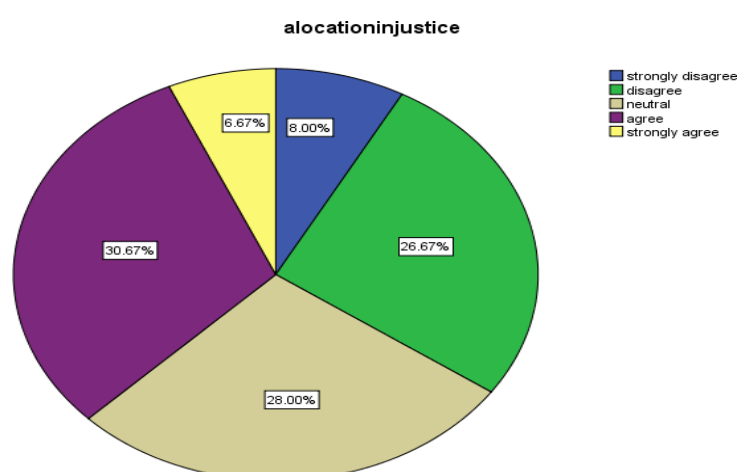


Figure.2

### Allocation Injustice

The media is not seen as a good career choice of women in a society such as Pakistan as confirmed by the report done by the Global Media Monitoring Project in 2005; the report was titled: More Women in Media: The Way Forward by Margaret Gallagher. There is a certain mentality that exists in the society in relation to female employees in the media houses. Most families are of the opinion that women are not respected in the media and thus, they frequently discourage or avert their female family members into joining the profession. Women are commonly faced with challenges and setbacks by their respective families even before they set foot in the media industry. Journalism is yet to be considered as a perfect career choice by women even in the modern age of technological development.

Most of the female journalists indicated that they are assigned jobs according to their gender. They are assigned with less and less crucial duties and are hardly allocated priority duties. Women journalists are usually treated as the weaker sex and their roles are modified to suit that trend. There are minimal opportunities to report to hard news or breaking news on-site, as well as live coverage. Rather, they are usually assigned to write side stories, documentaries and other content that will enable them to exercise their skills and talents. This discrimination on the basis of gender limits their chances to acquire new competencies and the wider experience. Women reporters are constantly given menial duties since their superiors believe that women are not capable of doing similar work as their male counterparts or in cases where they are given high priority duties.

Many divisions of both print and electronic media respondents reported that there is gender discrimination in Pakistani media organizations. Moreover, the discussion demonstrated that female reporters believe that they are not provided with equal opportunity to work on high-profile tasks or receive professional training.

## RQ2. Are Pakistani women in media having a training problem?

Journalists need to be professionally trained at all levels so that they can effectively carry out their work. In the field of journalism, several kinds of professional training systems exist, and the female journalists believe that male journalists have more opportunities to get technical training in reporting and media education.

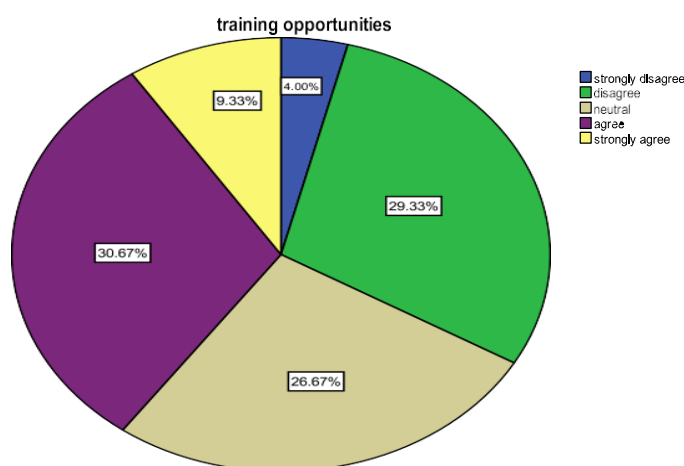


Figure.3

This question brought about similar answers, meaning that women journalists believe that they are not given enough chances in comparison with their male counterparts. A lot of the women concurred that there is gender discrimination in training programs that are provided to journalists. It becomes clear that to ensure equal skills of female journalists, they need equal access to professional and technical training opportunities, which will strengthen their abilities and make them competing in the mainstream media. Nowadays, no specific center exists where women can train in journalism. Women journalists affirmed that whatever they work they do it at their risk and their own will since there is no systematic methodology, no organized pattern, and no formal structure in existence.

The issue raised by female journalists was the lack of training institutions and the scarcity of opportunities to upgrade their skills to work in the fields and carry out professional duties, as opposed to their male counterparts. They are also typically assigned lower-level or quality tasks that are less important instead of jobs where creativity and abilities can be fostered.

Gender-based discrimination during promotions was another issue raised by female journalists on a frequent basis. It is claimed that most of them do not even qualify to be promoted solely because they are female and they rarely get to be the managers even when they have the necessary skills and experience. There is a feeling that women are not treated equally during promotion decision making and their quality of work and experience are usually disregarded. This therefore means that female journalists end up serving junior men.

### **RQ3. What is the number of women journalists in the media?**

In media organizations in Rawalpindi/Islamabad, the number of female journalists is so low as compared to male journalists. This difference can be guided by various factors including the fact that there are other opportunities available to educated women in the capital, and the belief that journalism is more challenging as compared to working in an office or in the teaching field. Also, the teachers or parents of many women discourage them to work in journalism. However, a few women still engage in the work of a journalist or reporter, making attempts to find their way in the media industry.

There is also a high rate of non-admission of female journalists to the top positions thus discouraging further entry of women into the profession. There are unequal promotion opportunities and in most cases gender is the major hindrance. The top management is found to be reluctant in promoting female journalists and that gives them less facilities and resources. The media environment in Pakistan is still gender-biased following the existing patriarchal systems that do not encourage women to consider journalism. Gender based policies of exclusion of women are rife in terms of promotion. The top management and male colleagues are required to show more respect and more women must be involved in decision-making including hiring more women.

RQ4. Women journalists tend to have an unfamiliar atmosphere and facilities since both print and electronic media are largely dominated by males. This negative environment makes it difficult to perform and restricts their chances of promotion similar to that of male workers.

## Harassment

The problem of gender issues is not yet comprehended in Pakistani media houses because of lack of awareness and gender-biased culture of society. Sexual harassment does not mean touching; it is also a form of using improper sexual communication, gestures, and behavior. Female reporters are usually pressurized to ensure that they are on good terms with their bosses; otherwise, they can be demoted. Good PR and cordial relationships with the senior officers are seen to be the key to the female journalists rising in rank or attaining higher positions.

The results of analysis showed that a vast majority of female journalists mentioned that they were harassed by their colleagues at the workplace. Few people did not agree with this evaluation, others were uncertain or even unknowledgeable about such things. Some of the reported forms of harassment were inappropriate touching, being deliberately bumped or otherwise by male co-workers in the workplace.

### HARASSMENT CAUSED TO WOMEN JOURNALISTS IN THE FIELD OR OFFICE OF PRINT/ELECTRONIC MEDIA

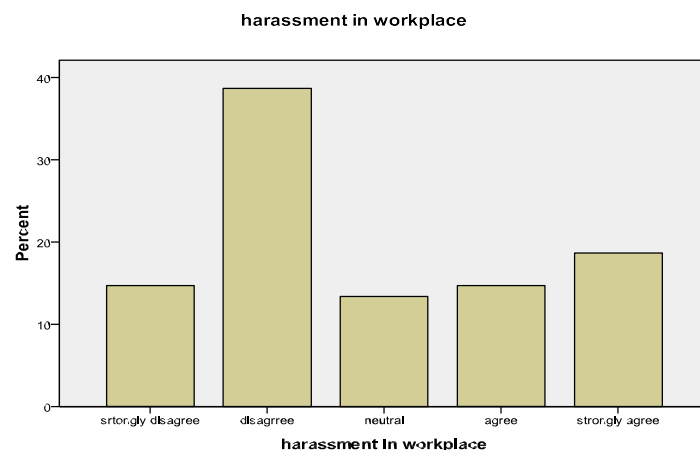


Figure.4

### Domestic Violence against Women journalists in the Newspaper and Television industries.

Most female journalists said that they were harassed and believe that they were victims of this behavior. In this regard, harassment can be both verbal and physical, whether in the office or the field, and this negatively impacts on their work environment and their feeling of safety.

### Discrimination of Female Journalists in Salaries.

It was discovered that majority of female journalists think that their salaries are not equal to those of male journalists of the same type and qualification. Females in the media have less promotional opportunities and they are usually given minor assignments. They do not get fairly rewarded when they carry out the same job as their male counterparts. Most of the

owners of these media organizations reckon that women employees would be happy to work with less remuneration. The satisfaction levels of female journalists with their salaries were low with only a few giving satisfaction and most stating the level as dissatisfaction.

Numerous female reporters confirmed that there is gender-based wage discrimination and that their compensation is very low as compared to their male counterparts of the same skill and job value. Almost half of the participants emphasized that there are still gender differences in the opportunities of professional training and skills development. Low training opportunities also have a direct effect on the wages and promotion opportunities of these people. Lack of opportunity to get down to higher value and complicated tasks by senior management often denies female journalists the opportunity to take professional courses and short term trainings, and thus there are very few promotions. Conversely, male journalists are habitually given training and a chance to attain more certifications or diplomas, which increases their remuneration and their career advances.

Other female journalists indicated that male co-workers, juniors or even managers make such inappropriate or dirty jokes at the workplace regularly. Although about 50 percent of the surveyed do not believe they have had such behavior, a high proportion of respondents affirmed. These episodes indicate the disrespect and insensitivity of male co-workers showing a part of verbal harassment of female journalists and creating an unpleasant working atmosphere..

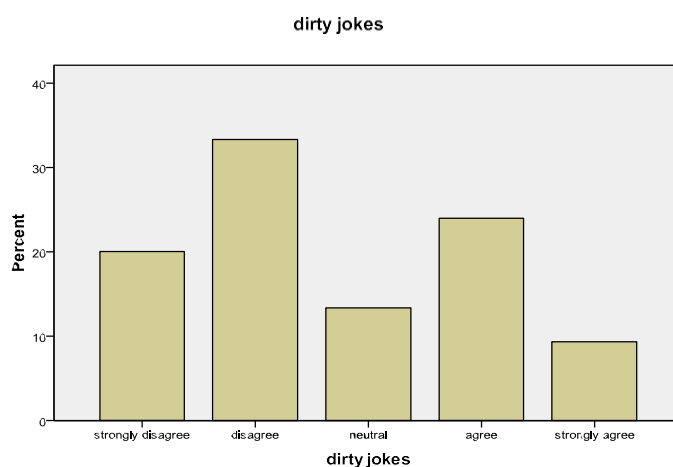


Figure.5

According to the results of the charts, 35 percent of female journalists reported that their colleagues and supervisors share inappropriate or dirty jokes, and they are not satisfied with such attitude. Findings also indicate that most of the female journalists do not have a feeling that they are not given medical facilities equal to that of their male counterparts. Whereas the male journalists are entitled to receive the full scope of medical benefits, the female journalists are usually treated unequally in this aspect. A minority of female respondents (20% only) claimed to get the same medical facilities as their male colleagues in the news outlets.

## Medical Facilities



It can be analyzed that female journalists are not very satisfied with medical assistance they receive. The percentage of people who expressed satisfaction was very low because they thought that there is no disparity between male and female journalists in medical provisions based on gender. Some of the respondents also stated that they had to work late nights but the majority stated that they are happy with their work schedules and there is little gender discrimination in the late-night jobs.

RQ5: journalistic bodies and their welfare of female journalists.

In her book *Media Law for Journalists*, Ursula Smart (2011) discusses the role of the media organizations and the journalist bodies in setting the ethical standards and professionalism of the journalists. Such organizations represent the rights and benefits of journalists and endeavor to ensure that the legitimate demands of journalists are accepted by the management and government authorities. Under this kind of an environment, journalists can be able to work in their roles efficiently and with commitment. Besides, such organizations also implement projects that are specifically targeted on the welfare and professional growth of female journalists in order to cope with gender-based issues of the media industry.

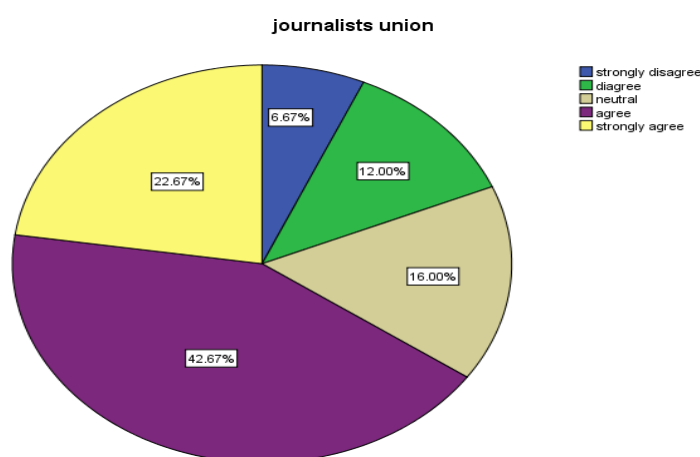


Figure.6

The pie chart above reveals that female journalists are usually happy with the place taken by media bodies in countering gender discrimination in journalism. Many of the respondents were satisfied with the steps taken by the media houses to reduce gender-based inequities.

Moreover, the female journalists agreed with the hypothesis that the government is actively undertaking the measures to fight against gender discrimination. They said they were happy with the role played by the government and recognized the support they got in order to undertake a career in journalism. A large percentage of the respondents indicated positive response as far as the efforts of the government in combating the gender-biased practices are concerned, that is, there is acceptance of the efforts that have been made to help the women in the media industry.

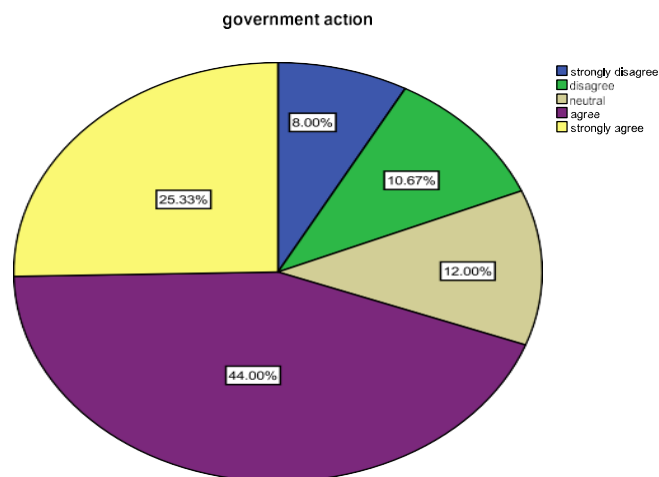


Figure.7

## 8. Conclusion, Discussion, and Implications

The paper finds that female journalists still have to encounter various discriminatory behaviors. Men have been the dominant gender in the field and despite an improvement in the gender aspect, a culture of gender prejudice still exists in most media houses. Women are often not included in key decision-making and discussions in newsrooms. They are also frequently deprived of political beats since the senior staff undermines them. Male journalists are still being offered most of the highest positions and high-stress assignments in the executive level. Instead of political or investigative reporting, women are usually assigned less hard subjects like lifestyle, culture and social stories. This limits their exposure and career growth.

Out of the statistical analysis and the intensive discussion that follows, the research classifies the following as the key relevant conclusions. Being discriminated is not limited to being in the hands of heads and authorities but also from fellow colleagues in the workplace. Sexual harassment happens to females by male employees. Promotion policies and beat assigning issues are more commonly encountered by women, rather than men, but they also occasionally get relaxed at a medical facility and working hours. The statistical study also discussed that there was gender inequity which was not necessarily statistically significant in encouragements in the print and electronic media. It was noted that women usually possess equal training and qualification in their work field yet they are not offered equal opportunities to be promoted as their male counterparts. The study reveals that females are susceptible to gender inequity practices at the workplace. Media unions have to deal with many problems and gender discrimination cases both regionally, nationally and internationally.

Some of the root causes of this disparity are the stereotypes concerning the emotional vulnerability of women, cultural practice concerning maternity leave, and the old patriarchal guidelines as pointed out by Selwyn Stanley (2004). Despite slight improvement over the years, there is still discrimination entrenched in many of the newsroom policies and practices. Among other things, women also suffer inequity when it comes to professional training, promotional opportunities and even setting meaningful work. Although sometimes there is provision of the flexible working hours, it does not take care of wider structural barriers that are hindering the advancement of women.

## 8.1 Recommendations

According to the results, a number of recommendations are made to reduce the inequalities in the media industry based on gender. The government ought to institute monitoring mechanisms by use of both government and non-governmental institutions to produce annual reports on human resource development in the organizations. Information that should be included in these reports is the percentage of women who have been assigned to different tasks, the number of women as well as men who got promoted, general ratio of the employment, and the training opportunities given to each gender within the year. This information should be presented to one of the relevant committees via the Ministry of Women Development to compare and identify discrimination.

Furthermore, the institutions are to implement compulsory regulations that are named as Gender Discrimination at the Workplace and make employees evaluate the actions of their supervisors, peers and managers. To ensure confidentiality, such forms need to contain the gender of the respondent and not his name and must be handed over in presence of an unbiased authority. Work places should have established different quotas of women in their assignments, training programs, administrative positions, and managerial posts. Additionally, the government ought to implement equal wages and remove salary-based differences through taking into consideration the qualification and experience of the employees instead of taking into consideration their gender.

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