

**Abstract:** *Distinct Society individuals based on gender. This stratification leads to unequal power relations within society, particularly in media organizations. With the technological changes, gender expectations and women's participation in society is transformed. In Pakistan, gender roles and expectations are still ingrained in the patriarchal life. In this context, we investigated women's status in Pakistani media by exploring their position in the newsroom, their career advancement, and the role that harassment and discrimination play in professional attainment. The primary objective of this study involves exploring women in journalism from different perspectives. We used a cross-sectional design accompanied by Structural Equation Modelling to investigate the relevant phenomenon. We selected a sample of n= 224 female journalists using the stratified sampling method and executed close-ended surveys for the data gathering purposes. Findings indicated that women's experiences in the newsroom echo the struggle for survival as they are confined to soft beats with no recruitment policy specified for their induction. However, to cope with the persistent challenges, women journalists have also adopted masculine traits and routines to fit within the journalistic culture. Therefore, we conclude that journalists career in the media and be competent enough to make media organizations if opportunities are given.*

**Key Words:** Career, Discrimination, Harassment, Newsroom Culture, Women Journalists

## Background

Woman's status has its own share of heterogeneity in Pakistan. The role of women has different interpretations in terms of the rural-urban divide and social and economic status. Other factors for the plight of women have different interpretations for women from different strata. However, they do suffer in diverse ways. For Pakistani women, individual and institutional violence is not a rare phenomenon [Asian Development Bank, 2000]. In society, the feudal system has triggered severe antipathy towards women. A famous quotation, Zan Zar and Zameen [Women Money and Land] as a source of all evils, signifies women's disrespect in a patriarchal society like Pakistan. This expression is used to blame women in the case of any undesirable behavior [Qaisrani et al., 2016]. According to Blackstone [2003], the roles for both males and females are socially constructed. Therefore, individual identity plus gender relations remains powerfully shaped and defined through family, social interaction, and cultural values.

Consequently, males and females differ by their biological attributes defined and refer to the physical parts of an individual, like composition, the structure

of the body and facial hair, etc. Biological characteristic is long-lasting, whereas gender is social, short-lived, and fluctuating through culture and shaped by societal values and norms [Kangas et al., 2014]. In traditional society, gender roles are ascribed dos and don'ts for both genders. Generally, three types of women's roles are identified as reproductive, productive, and community management responsibilities [Fajarwati et al., 2016]. The reproductive role is referred to as a biologically specified capability of women to bear children, which is physically unrealistic for males.

Additionally, all other domestic responsibilities and nurturing the child, which in some societies, men are not expected and allowed to participate in and are associated with women. [Xue, 2008]. The productive role assigned to women remains associated with work roles, besides a reproductive role if women have time, qualification, and approval of the society to participate and join the workplace. Again, due to an unseen taboo, women are not allowed to join all types of jobs. Society considers some jobs suitable for women, commonly labor-intensive, less interactive with males, and low-income

\* Assistant Professor, Department of Mass Communication, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, Pakistan.  
Email: [saadia.pasha@aiou.edu.pk](mailto:saadia.pasha@aiou.edu.pk)

† Professor, University of Punjab, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

professions like an agricultural field, cleaning, and teaching gender-neutral careers. The third community management role referred to chores considered essential for society to co-existence [Creedon \(1989\)](#) as These can include weddings, family gatherings, etc. These events are designed and executed for all to relish, but for women to work harder every day [\[Payne et al., 2008\]](#). On the one hand, these key roles bind social groups together, but on the other side, this also reinforces the inequality of work. Domestic work is set aside for women as men are not expected to take part in household chores, but still, the harsh fact is that women's work is neither recognized nor appreciated [\[Højgaard & Esseveld, 2000\]](#).

Similarly, women in female journalists in Pakistan stay marginalized with a meager participation rate in the journalistic decision-making process. Only 20% out of 36% literate females join journalism as a profession [\[T. S. Ali et al., 2011\]](#). Although Mass media in Pakistan has dramatically encouraged gender equality almost on every level, women in news media are still confronting gender inequality in several ways. For instance, social and gender discrimination, ethnic constraints, cultural norms, stereotypes, and long working hours. [\[Jóhannsdóttir & Einarsdóttir, 2015; Zia, 2007\]](#). These concerns widely hinder women's intentions to opt for journalism as a career in both print and electronic media [\[Hafeez & Zahid, 2020\]](#). This situation indicates gender inequality as a critical concern in Pakistani news media as the key posts in the media, considered senior and decision-making positions, i.e., Managing Editor, Director, or Editor-in-Chief, etc., are being held by only 11% of women, which is thought-provoking. Despite mass media in Pakistan having progressed and improved their performance, gender discrimination and inequality lead to several other issues for the women in the country. [\[Hafeez & Zahid, 2020\]](#). As a result, these obstacles never allow women to actively join journalism as existing female journalists confront several issues that discourage future females from adopting journalism as their career [\[Rotter, 2019\]](#).

Thus, by keeping in view the prevailing career concerns for the female journalists in Pakistan, this research emphasizes that journalism is not a gender-neutral career as newsroom practices prioritize masculinity and marginalize women. Women's gender roles are often used as explanations to justify the assignments they are given [\[Franks, 2008\]](#). Further, masculine standards perceive women as unsuitable for journalistic careers in a media career and view them as "out of place." Women's gender identities, physique,

appearance, and present age challenges at the workplace [\[United Nations, 2011\]](#). However, women's lives are more challenging than men's in journalistic work. Unequal power relations, gender-based discrimination in allocation of beats/desks, poor working conditions, harassment are a few challenges women journalists face at the workplace and in the field. Women journalists often negotiated various personal, professional, and socio structurally challenges, usually less discussed [\[Jaworska & Larrivé, 2011\]](#). Hence, it is necessary to identify the factors that affect women performing their duties. In this regard, we aim to examine

1. The status of female journalists regarding their roles.
2. The role of challenges in affecting the female journalists, and
3. How the women journalists perceive gender as a factor in careers?

### **Women Journalists: Gender Identity and Gender Performance**

Gender is a multilayered concept. Overall, gender is a socially constructed category that distinguishes males and females due to their roles. Nevertheless, in general perspective, different explanation emphasizes that gender and power are interrelated. The present study draws inference of gender directly related to power as a critical matter [\[Gallagher, 2005\]](#). As noted by [Kim \(2006\)](#), gender indicates the connotations that were connected to the differences surrounded in culture. He further described that gender classifies an individual into groups and establishes societal relations in each dimension of life. He linked gender to "hierarchy, power, and inequality, not simply differences."

However, gender should not be perceived as a signal structure but as comprising substructures. These three substructures are the division of labor, power, and organization structure. The social structure indicates the presence of rules, guidelines, and norms to restrict individual freedom. Division of labor implies allocating work to certain types of people [\[R. W Connell, 2005\]](#). Judith Lorbe (1994) correlates with Connell's argument that statuses are socially constructed. Lorbe highlighted that women's and men's status is unequal, and work allocated to males and females are separated. Males' work is valued more as compared to those assigned to females.

The nature of the organization defines the division of labor; for instance, specific jobs like management have been linked with masculinity since they are structured around aggression and toughness, while receptionist, hostess, and teaching

have been linked to femininity [\[Wedgwood, 2009\]](#). In Connell's model, power relations emphasize the "hierarchy of power" among manifold masculinities in an organizational structure. She pointed out that several methods are used to gain power through force and hegemony [\[Betz & O'Connell, 1989\]](#).

### **Gender Identities and Stereotypes**

Previous studies have identified stereotypes that negatively affect women journalists. [Radu, Wellington S; Chekera \(2014\)](#) noted that women were viewed as sexual objects or weak and motherly. Moreover, women are perceived as inexperienced, unassertive, and needing help. [Pasha, S.A., and Saleem \(2019\)](#) described women as sexual objects. Women are evaluated based on their physical approaches instead of their talent and capabilities. When women are identified as weak, they are perceived as craving male protection. These stereotypes of women as weak entities adversely influence the distribution of stories/beats. [De Vuyst and Raeymaeckers \(2019\)](#) pointed out that women were restricted to covering a specific topic and were often denied challenging assignments as a tactic to protect them. This type of labeling "sends an unstated message that women are not suitable or competent for performing challenging tasks."

Furthermore, [Lachover \(2005\)](#) investigated women journalists' interactions with their colleagues and found that gender stereotypes work as influential factors to attain information about their desired topics. Besides, those sources also consider women harmless, leading them to treat women as weak and submissive to share information [\[De Vuyst & Raeymaeckers, 2019\]](#). Similarly, women in media depict a paradox. These women are professional reporters, news reporters, analysts, yet they are treated as inexperienced to the male employees [\[Adeola, 2016; Chambers et al., 2004\]](#).

### **Unequal Power Relations**

[Zuiderveld, 2011](#) argued that women are deprived of many tasks to keep them from gaining resources and senior positions. Most women are not given hard news to cover and stay in junior positions due to the nature of their tasks. [Okono \(2016\)](#) also concurred and provided a relevant reason that women find it hard to keep pace with work and family life. That is the reason news media is primarily controlled and dominated by males across the globe.

Likewise, [Zuiderveld, 2011](#) cited an example of a female German journalist who witnessed that sometimes individuals who get promoted please their boss. In this regard, female journalists can quickly build an unprofessional relationship with their

boss; however, dating an old-aged man is highly awkward for young females, having talent yet zero appreciation.

### **Discrimination at Workplace**

Married and house-makers, female journalists face more stereotyped perceptions than the single ones. However, by keeping in view their plight, single women also avoid making any marital or relevant commitments [\[Guillaume & Pochic, 2009\]](#). Moreover, women journalists overlook themselves and consider their careers weak, unimportant, and less considerable. These employees think that their position in the organization is less significant, contributive, and productive. Consequently, research on the self-perception among female journalists is another essential factor to be investigated [\[Ross, 2001\]](#). Despite several researchers investigating female journalists, their focus remained certain and mainly on exploring the types of beats covered by these journalists. These studies mutually agreed on the marginalized position of female journalists and less productive roles by the male-dominated organizations. Also validated by [Ross et al. \(2018\)](#), they argued that the existing literature on female journalists remained narrowed, focusing on a single aspect, and found underrepresenting female journalists in their organizations.

[Mendes & Carter \(2008\)](#) further witnessed that a majority of British females journalism students rarely want to join news media as their career due to increased gender inequality and inequity. Underrepresentation, soft beats, and less salary are the dynamic mechanisms behind not preferring journalism as a career. [Dierf-Pierre \(2007\)](#) noted that the primary roles assigned to women are to work as covering soft news or news having less relevance and values [\[Kirat, 1998; Mellado et al., 2018; Mwesige, 2004\]](#). Women who join traditionally stereotyped and male-oriented careers and roles generally face several issues regarding gendered perceptions, and journalism is no exception [\[Jones, 2008\]](#).

### **Feminist Standpoint Theory**

The epistemology and intersectionality of feminism have aroused beneficial theories that do not fall at a dead-end regarding the automatic outcomes that bypass monotonous and require sameness/difference debate [\[Swigonski, 1993\]](#). So, suppose both these theories are considered responsible for the messiness of concepts circulated gender issues. In that case, they also generate more cultured and nuanced resources that elaborate the worth of social identity and the historical factors

based on knowledge-seeking or claims of knowledge ([Gurung, 2020](#)).

Feminist stance epistemologists like [Haraway \(2009\)](#), [Harding \(2004\)](#), [Smith \(1974\)](#), and others including Sandra Harding and Dorothy Smith, stress upon the basis on which gender, as well as other magnitudes of identity, gives position to subjects, which also influence besides knowledge over decisive queries they ask (or refuse to ask), except the approaches used for replying such queries. Social conditions, including the two boundaries, may permit knowledge to anyone. They contest the universalization of accounts based on the knowledge that neglects the status of the knower or any context constructed on social norms ([Steckle, 2018](#)). However, all the opportunities are "partial" feminists claim that some circumstances have fewer limitations than others, so eventually are in better condition to generate grave queries linked with the persisting briefs. Whereas all places are "partial," feminists maintain that limitations are lesser than others in some circumstances, which help ask serious queries on set beliefs. Systematically disadvantaged social groups may generate standpoints considered less distorted, which specify them as "strangers," rolled out from strategy tilting towards social order ([Silvestre Cabrera et al., 2020](#)).

In comparison to males, females do not consider ignorance more seriously. In contrast, there is no specific procedure to analyze the level of knowledge and measure how much it is better than others. Black women can enjoy the epistemic privilege for those who face multiplied pressures. In the viewpoint of [Collins \(1999\)](#), black women consider hierarchies that cross factors including race and gender besides the class offered to them as a "unique angle of vision" on a world constructed on social norms. Their unique perception represents the daily experiences based on oppression and fighting the factor of oppression. In comparison, stances are not oriented by any single position, whereas no foundation of inequality exists. The "non-additive" paradigm presented by [Collins \(1999\)](#) points out that the number of identities, which include race, as well as class beside gender, are intermingled with each other, which generates an interwoven matrix due to relations that have effects on two types of questions one people's perception to see the world and the second other's perception to see them.

## Research Methods

We adopted a "Cross-sectional design" as a research strategy suggested by [Al-Skaf et al., 2021](#). We used the quantitative data to perform the

Structural Equation Modelling for a comprehensive analysis. According to [Asparouhov et al., 2015](#), Structural Equation Modelling helps comprehensively validate the proposed between the study variables. SEM also helps generate new ideas and advance the existing ones to bring more clarity in research practice ([Samuels, 2016](#)).

## Study Population & Sampling

All women journalists registered with press clubs in Pakistan were the total population of the study. According to the list obtained from press clubs, we chose women strata and selected them as respondents. A proportionate sample of woman journalists was selected from every press club to construct a study sample. We employed the stratified sampling technique. Furthermore, the proportionate sampling method was further employed to select the individuals from each press club based on the number of registered women journalists from the press clubs of their province to reach the number 357 sample size. The response rate for the survey remained 63.0% as the potential respondents incompletely filled 133 questionnaires. The frequency calculation of survey respondents indicated that the majority of the women journalists were aged less than 18-35 42.0%, followed by 39.3% in the age of 36-45, and 18.8% were in the age bracket of 46 and above.

Likewise, most female journalists were either unmarried 60.4% or married 37.4% and divorced/widow 1.8%. Regarding the types of media organization, we found that the majority of the women journalists, 43.8% belong to the newspaper, followed by 38.4% working in television stations, 10.3% were freelance, and 7.6% were working in a news agency. As 70.1% of women journalists have a master's degree, 21.9% fall in BA, and 6.3% hold an MPhil degree. Lastly, most women journalists had 1-4 with 42.0% years of experience, followed by 36.6% in 5-9 years, 17.0% in 10-15 years, and 4.5% had 16 and above years of experience. As evident from the table, only 4.5% of women have experienced more than 16 and above.

Further, we examined the internal consistency of the constructs by assessing the Construct Reliability and Convergent Validity as suggested by [Mohajan 2017](#). Table 1 summarizes the results of construct reliability and convergent validity. As visible that Cronbach Alpha values of all the variables are higher than the threshold value of 0.7 (ranging from .705 to .891). Similarly, regarding the Composite Reliability of variables, all the values surpass the threshold value of 0.7 (ranging from .779 to .964), the Construct Reliability is successfully established

[Koonce & Kelly, 2014]. Furthermore, to assess the convergent validity of study variables, we first calculated the Factor Loading values, surpassing the threshold value of 0.5, along with the Average

Variance Extracted values that are also greater than the threshold value of 0.5 [ranging from .745 to .927]. Thus, we found that the convergent validity is also validated [Ab Hamid et al., 2017].

**Table 1.** Reliability & Validity Assessment (Convergent, Discriminant Validity & Construct Reliability)

Variables	Items	FL	LAM	EPL	CA	AVE	CR
Journalistic Role	JR1	.776	.602	.397	.719	.747	.779
	JR2	.735	.540	.459			
	JR3	.736	.541	.458			
	JR4	.767	.588	.411			
	JR5	.721	.519	.480			
Guardian Role	GR1	.720	.518	.481	.813	.748	.781
	GR2	.716	.512	.487			
	GR3	.785	.616	.383			
	GR4	.716	.512	.487			
	GR5	.802	.643	.356			
Leadership Role	LR1	.839	.703	.296	.817	.810	.863
	LR2	.782	.611	.389			
	LR3	.769	.591	.408			
	LR4	.837	.700	.299			
	LR5	.825	.685	.314			
Agent of Change	CAR1	.710	.504	.495	.891	.789	.825
	CAR2	.753	.567	.432			
	CAR3	.753	.567	.432			
	CAR4	.885	.783	.216			
	CAR5	.786	.617	.382			
Recruitment	REC1	.978	.956	.043	.791	.808	.865
	REC2	.739	.546	.453			
	REC3	.802	.643	.356			
	REC4	.721	.519	.480			
	REC5	.800	.640	.360			
Mentoring	MENT1	.870	.756	.243	.830	.927	.964
	MENT2	.938	.879	.120			
	MENT3	.910	.828	.171			
	MENT4	.978	.956	.043			
	MENT5	.943	.889	.110			
Pay & Reward	PR1	.808	.652	.347	.767	.763	.804
	PR2	.713	.508	.491			
	PR3	.788	.620	.379			
	PR4	.791	.625	.374			
	PR5	.719	.516	.483			
Promotion	PROM1	.807	.651	.348	.764	.772	.816
	PROM2	.747	.558	.441			
	PROM3	.777	.603	.396			
	PROM4	.819	.670	.329			
	PROM5	.712	.506	.493			
Harassment	HS1	.720	.518	.481	.755	.787	.814
	HS2	.753	.567	.753			
	HS3	.832	.692	.307			
	HS4	.836	.698	.301			
	HS5	.797	.635	.364			
Discrimination	DISN1	.813	.660	.339	.705	.745	.778
	DISN2	.718	.515	.484			
	DISN3	.707	.499	.500			
	DISN4	.774	.599	.400			

Variables	Items	FL	LAM	EPL	CA	AVE	CR
Work-family Balance	DISN5	.715	.511	.488			
	WBL1	.811	.657	.342			
	WBL2	.748	.559	.440			
	WBL3	.762	.580	.419	.706	.767	.810
	WBL4	.770	.592	.407			
	WBL5	.744	.553	.416			

**Discriminant Validity**

According to [Farrell and Rudd \(2009\)](#), Fornell-Larcker and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio are two criteria required to examine and validate the discriminant validity. In this context, we first

estimated the Fornell-Larcker Criterion. As visible in Table 2, the Fornell-Larcker Criterion is sufficiently fulfilled. All the square root values of Average Variance Extracted are more significant than the correlation between the Average Variance Extracted and the other constructs.

**Table 2.** Fornell-Larcker Criterion Scale

	JR	GR	LR	CAR	REC	MENT	PR	PROM	HS	DISN	WBL
JR	.558										
GR	.099	.559									
LR	-.173	-.008	.656								
CAR	-.114	-.018	.003	.622							
REC	-.058	.059	-.026	-.001	.652						
MENT	-.010	-.082	.147	.010	.028	.859					
PR	-.050	-.026	.053	.032	-.156	-.003	.582				
PROM	.158	.055	-.130	-.109	-.084	-.063	-.029	.595			
HS	-.088	-.058	-.024	-.020	-.003	.098	-.003	-.109	.619		
DISN	-.035	-.001	-.010	-.102	-.048	-.013	-.014	-.021	-.088	.555	
WBL	-.037	-.046	-.022	.160	.089	-.123	-.018	-.109	.010	-.103	.588

Table 3 also shows that the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of all the research constructs is .311, lower than the threshold value of 0.85 [\[Ab Hamid et al.,](#)

[2017\]](#). Thus, we have successfully fulfilled the HTMT criterion, indicating that the discriminant validity is also established.

**Table 3.** Heterotrait-Monotrait-Ratio Scale

	JR	GR	LR	CAR	REC	MENT	PR	PROM	HS	DISN	WBL
JR											
GR	.006										
LR	.179	.229									
CAR	.068	-.118	.444								
REC	.091	.023	.029	-.042							
MENT	-.002	.175	.051	-.209	.426						
PR	.137	-.009	-.080	-.087	.084	.043					
PROM	.030	-.077	-.110	.022	.445	-.014	.051				
HS	.129	.020	-.010	.063	.032	.013	-.011	.072			
DISN	.027	.096	.079	.089	.066	.074	.303	-.080	.060		
WBL	.044	.120	.011	-.040	.133	.203	.557	-.059	-.077	.480	

**Coefficients of Determination R<sup>2</sup>:**

We executed Coefficients of Determination R<sup>2</sup> to assess the predicting potential of our study

propositions as suggested by [Dufour 2011\]](#). Notably, we can conduct Coefficients of Determination R<sup>2</sup> either by calculating the square root of Bivariate

Pearson correlation Coefficients of latent variables or by conducting regression analysis and attaining the R square values [Alghizzawi et al., 2018]. Table 4 summarizes the results of the Coefficients of Determination R<sup>2</sup> as indicated that the R<sup>2</sup> of latent

variables ranges from .632 to .878, which shows that our propositions are moderately strong to anticipate the relationships between proposed study variables.

**Table 4.** Coefficients of Determination R<sup>2</sup>

Variables	R <sup>2</sup>	Status
JR	.715	Moderately strong
GR	.736	Moderately strong
LR	.811	Strong
CAR	.632	Moderately strong
REC	.617	Moderately strong
MENT	.733	Moderately strong
PR	.667	Moderately strong
HS	.682	Moderately strong
DISN	.710	Moderately strong
WBL	.878	Strong

### Path Analysis & Linear Regression Analysis

To further proceed with the Structural Equation Modelling, we conducted path analysis and Linear Regression Analysis to assess the relationship between the proposed study variables. Zumbo [2005] noted that path analysis provides a pathway to validate the relationship between exogenous and endogenous variables with in-depth and comprehensive details. Thus, in the current study, we found that the Journalist Role is the only variable whose Path Value (.366) is not significant, hence not affirming the relationship between Journalist Role and Female Journalists in Pakistan ( $B = .019, p >$

$.870$ ). However, regarding the relationship between female journalists and latent variables we found that, there is a significant relationship between female journalists, Guardian Role ( $B = .010, p > .040$ ), Leadership Role ( $B = .443, p > .007$ ), Agent of Change ( $B = .871, p > .004$ ), Recruitment ( $B = .819, p > .020$ ), Mentoring ( $B = .449, p > .051$ ), Pay and Reward ( $B = -.310, p > .067$ ), Promotion ( $B = .023, p > .081$ ), Harassment ( $B = -.405, p > .014$ ), Discrimination ( $B = .229, p > .012$ ), Work-Family Balance ( $B = .095, p > .069$ ). Thus we found that female journalists are facing with several gender-based work problems that are negatively affecting their working capabilities and also their professional rights [S. Ali et al., 2020].

**Table 5.** Path Analysis & Hypothesis Testing

Variables	Path	t-value	f-value	Sign
WJ>JR	.366	.163	.027	.870
WJ>GR	.702**	2.275	1.066	.040**
WJ>LR	.171***	2.739	7.503	.007***
WJ>CAR	.181***	2.819	8.104	.004***
WJ>REC	.565***	2.496	4.126	.020**
WJ>MENT	.327**	1.965	3.860	.051*
WJ>PR	.348***	1.840	3.387	.067*
WJ>PROM	.231***	1.010	2.169	.081*
WJ>HS	.625***	-2.468	6.092	.014
WJ>DISN	.859***	2.644	2.702	.012
WJ>WBL	.614***	2.726	1.527	.069

### Discussion and Conclusion

According to [Thorpe 2009], gender perceptions today are more likely to attribute women to their domestic roles. Their professional careers are considered extra things added to their domestic roles and contributions. These over-increasing gendered perceptions lead to underestimating their

roles and depriving them of their rights to work and free will. The overall findings of the current study are compatible with the study conducted by Melin [2008], who found horizontal patterns of beats assigned to the male and female journalists. Moreover, women are always given soft beats that discourage their abilities to cover the hard beats. The absence of equal opportunities also hinders them

from gaining promotion in their organization (Holmqvist, 2020). Moreover, findings indicated that women with ten years or more experience are scarce. Rightsizing is a consistent process in these news media organizations, and women are more vulnerable to this process (Coopers, 2008).

Keeping a fair balance between domestic life and career is a prominent concern for female journalists (Tinke, 2014). The findings indicated that the working hours are pretty long and trouble many women to keep the appropriate balance effectively. These women face problems spending time with their families and comprise their social life and gathering. These female journalists have to make a strict selection between social life, family, and career that causes psychological distress, affecting their work performance.

We also found that the challenges faced by female journalists involve: career roles and challenges faced by women in terms of beats assigned to them, the perceptions about women and hard news, and also women's role as a submissive in media organizations. Besides, physical attributions such as considering women as weak and men as bodily weak is another major constraint found in the current research. Demanding media schedules further cause women journalists to prefer soft beats relevant to their family life and domestic chores. Consequently, it leads to psychological and physical stress that demotivates them and even future professionals who want to join news media as their career. Several female journalists agreed that they are forced to adopt an aggressive working style to show compatibility with the masculine way of working and dealing. Even though they are women, they have to work and behave like men, showing the masculine style of constructive ideas and actions. These false standards of success affect their overall personality and make them feel as if women are practically inferior to male colleagues.

This increased gender inequality and gender discrimination also lead to low self-esteem, low confidence, and disparity among the other female journalists. Female journalists try their best to confront the challenges and fulfill their role expectations regardless of their weak positions in their organizations and male colleagues overlooking their talent and capabilities. Instead of appreciating the women journalists and efforts to contribute to the development and progress of the organizations, these female journalists are widely criticized and humiliated by the dominant male colleagues. Thus, journalism is a highly competitive field for females in Pakistan, offering several positive and negative outcomes based on gender stereotypes and

perceptions in society.

We focused on scrutinizing women journalists' status within the practices that exist in Pakistani media. In Pakistan, Organizations are not gender-neutral and mostly favor one gender identity. Media is a competitive and demanding field. The nature of the journalistic work based on immediacy and urgency follows the deadlines. The study concluded that women journalists had adopted masculine traits to fit within the journalistic culture to survive in a media career. The study concludes that the guardian and journalist roles are mutually exclusive due to society's role assigned to women. The nature of journalistic work demonstrates that a woman's role as a journalist and her social role are incompatible due to the patriarchal mindset. This study concludes that gender is a favor for newcomers (WJ strata 1), the hurdle for a middlecareer (WJ strata 2), and is irrelevant for (WJ strata 3) senior level. Women journalists perform double duties at work and home and are supposed to create a balance. The only way for women journalists to reach the top level in their profession is to sacrifice their home responsibilities or delay their marriages to give more time to their work. However, irrespective of the countless constraints, women journalists' whenever they get the opportunity, prove their worth as the best managers, establish disciplines in the office environment, and positively affect the contents and the presentation of news, setting new trends in media.

In terms of practices, journalism can strengthen its rationality on gendering. Women have proved their proficiency in devising genuine journalism. Undoubtedly, there are remarkable revolutionary changes in society that reflect in every field, and women have proved that the stereotypes devised and popularized against them are baseless. Despite several gender-based constraints, women have demonstrated practically that they are journalists, and their gender has nothing to do with their professionalism.

In an environment where journalism is a field that is suitable only for men, women are required to prove themselves exceeding their feminine limitations if they are committed to excelling in journalism. In journalism, gender-based segregation can easily be observed while dividing journalistic topics among male and female journalists. Some of the segments in this profession are merely considered suitable for males. For example, the themes that deal with the issues of power, structures, elites, and facts & news are exclusively supposed to be the topics of male journalism. On the other hand, themes of home, family, and other

human interest stories are thought to be female journalism. According to this study, the editorial offices have considered the segregation of topics based on gender similarly to other professions. Research proves that males and females may experience differently as professional journalists;

however, female journalists employ their efforts and professionalism equal to their male co-workers. The issues that discourage women from staying in this career are lack of proper job structure, lack of basic facilities, and job security.

## References

- Ab Hamid, M. R., Sami, W., & Mohamad Sidek, M. H. (2017). Discriminant Validity Assessment: Use of Fornell & Larcker criterion versus HTMT Criterion. *Journal of Physics: Conference Series, 890*, 012163. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/890/1/012163>
- Adeola, E. A. (2016). Deborah Chambers, Linda Steiner & Carole Fleming, Women and Journalism. *International Journal of Communication, 10*, 2501-2504.
- Alghizzawi, M., Salloum, S. A., & Habes, M. (2018). The role of social media in tourism marketing in Jordan. 2, 59–70.
- Ali, S., Youssef, E., & Gamar, A. (2020). Analyzing the News Media Practices Concerning Sexual Exploitation of Women. *Multicultural Education, 6*(November), 9–0. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4251870>
- Ali, T. S., Krantz, G., Gul, R., Asad, N., Johansson, E., & Mogren, I. (2011). Gender roles and their influence on life prospects for women in urban Karachi, Pakistan: a qualitative study. *Global Health Action, 4*(November), 7448. <https://doi.org/10.3402/gha.v4i0.7448>
- Al-Skaf, S., Youssef, E., Habes, M., Alhumaid, K., & Salloum, S. A. (2021). The Acceptance of Social Media Sites: An Empirical Study Using PLS-SEM and ML Approaches. *Advances in Intelligent Systems and Computing, 1339*(March), 548–558. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-69717-4\\_52](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-69717-4_52)
- Anwar Pasha, S., & Saleem, N. (2019). Investigating the Challenges Faced By Women Journalists in Islamic Societies: a Case Study of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. *Journal.Alqalamjournalpu.Com, 24*(24), 24–43. <http://journal.alqalamjournalpu.com/index.php/Al-Qalam/article/view/401>
- Asian Development Bank. (2000). Country Briefing Paper WOMEN IN PAKISTAN ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK Programs Department (West) and Office of Environment and Social Development. July.
- Asparouhov, T., Muthén, B., & Morin, A. J. S. (2015). Bayesian Structural Equation Modeling With Cross-Loadings and Residual Covariances: Comments on Stromeyer et al. *Journal of Management, 41*(6), 1561–1577. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206315591075>
- Betz, M., & O'Connell, L. (1989). Work Orientations of Males and Females: Exploring the Gender Socialization Approach. *Sociological Inquiry, 59*(3), 318–330. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-682X.1989.tb00109.x>
- Blackstone, A. M. (2003). Human Ecology: An Encyclopedia of Children, Families, and Environments. *Sociology, 335*–338. [https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/soc\\_facpub/1/%0Ahttps://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/soc\\_facpub](https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/soc_facpub/1/%0Ahttps://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/soc_facpub)
- Chambers, D., Steiner, L., & Fleming, C. (2004). *Women and Journalism (1st ed.)*. <https://www.routledge.com/Women-and-Journalism/Chambers-Steiner-Fleming/p/book/9780415274456>
- Collins, P. H. (1999). Feminist and Gender Theories. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429496592-26>
- Coopers, P. (2008). The Leaking Pipelines: Where are our female leaders? 79 women share their stories. Global Human Capital, Gender Advisory Council, March.
- Creedon, P. J. (1989). Public Relations History Misses 'Her Story.' *The Journalism Educator, 44*(3), 26–30. <https://doi.org/10.1177/107769588904400304>
- De Vuyst, S., & Raeymaeckers, K. (2019). Gender as a multilayered issue in journalism: A multi-method approach to studying barriers sustaining gender inequality in Belgian newsrooms. *European Journal of Women's Studies, 26*(1), 23–38. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350506817729856>
- Djerf-Pierre, M. (2007). The gender of journalism: the structure and logic of the field in the twentieth century. *Nordicom Review, 28*, 37-65.
- Dufour, J.-M. (2011). Coefficients of determination. <http://arxiv.org/abs/2007.08675>
- Fajarwati, A., Mei, E. T. W., Hasanati, S., & Sari, I. M. (2016). The Productive and Reproductive Activities of Women as Form of Adaptation and Post-disaster Livelihood Strategies in Huntap Kuwang and Huntap Plosokerep. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 227*, 370–377.

- <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2016.06.084>
- Farganis, S. (1997). Paradoxes of Gender. *International Studies in Philosophy*, 29(4), 127–129.  
<https://doi.org/10.5840/intstudphil1997294117>
- Farrell, A., & Rudd, J. M. (2009). *Factor Analysis and Discriminant Validity: A Brief Review of Some Practical Issues*. Australia-New Zealand Marketing Academy Conference, January 2009.
- Franks, S. (2008). Women and journalism. *Feminist Review*, 88(1), 177–179.  
<https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.fr.9400392>
- Gallagher, M. (2005). More Women in Media A Way Forward.
- Guillaume, C., & Pochic, S. (2009). What would you sacrifice? Access to top management and the work-life balance. *Gender, Work and Organization*, 16(1), 14–36.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/i.1468-0432.2007.00354.x>
- Gurung, L. (2020). Feminist Standpoint Theory: Conceptualization and Utility. *Dhaulagiri Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*, 14(January), 106–115.  
<https://doi.org/10.3126/dsaj.v14i0.27357>
- Hafeez, E., & Zahid, L. (2021). Sexism and Gender Discrimination in Pakistan's Mainstream News Media. *Handbook of Research on Discrimination, Gender Disparity, and Safety Risks in Journalism*, 60–89.  
<https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-6686-2.ch005>
- Haraway, D. J. (2009). Situated Knowledge: The Science Question in Feminism of Partial and the Privilege. *Feminist Studies*, 14(3), 575–599.
- Harding, S. (2004). *The Feminist Standpoint Theory Reader: Intellectual and Political Controversies* - Google Books.  
[https://books.google.com.pk/books?hl=en&lr=&id=qmSySHvly5IC&oi=fnd&pg=PR9&dq=Sandra+Harding+\(1991\).+feminist+standpoint+theory+pdf&ots=qMZrfdGhn&sig=DO6PuHjd7IPCww1xg4DbrOUStNk#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.com.pk/books?hl=en&lr=&id=qmSySHvly5IC&oi=fnd&pg=PR9&dq=Sandra+Harding+(1991).+feminist+standpoint+theory+pdf&ots=qMZrfdGhn&sig=DO6PuHjd7IPCww1xg4DbrOUStNk#v=onepage&q&f=false)
- Højgaard, L., & Esseveld, J. (2000). The Social Construction of Gender. *Gendering Elites*, 233–246.  
[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-62882-7\\_19](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-62882-7_19)
- Holmqvist, D. (2020). "We still have a long way to go": A comparative study of Swedish and Brazilian women sports journalists' challenges and perspectives.
- Jaworska, S., & Larrivé, P. (2011). Women, power and the media: Assessing the bias. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 43(10), 2477–2479.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2011.02.008>
- Jóhannsdóttir, V., & Einarsdóttir, P. (2015). Gender Bias in the Media: The Case of Iceland. *Veftímaritið Stjórnmal Og Stjórnsýsla*, 11(2), 207.  
<https://doi.org/10.13177/irpa.a.2015.11.2.5>
- Jones, C. (2008). Shona Women Mbira Players: Gender, Tradition and Nation in Zimbabwe. *Ethnomusicology Forum*, 17(1), 125–149.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17411910801972982>
- Kangas, A., Haider, H., & Fraser, E. (2014). Gender: Topic guide. 1–6.
- Kim, K. H. (2006). Obstacles to the success of female journalists in Korea. *Media, Culture & Society*, 28(1), 123–141.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443706059578>
- Kirat, M. (1998). Algerian journalists and their world. *The Global Journalist: News People around the World*, September, 323â€"48.
- Koonce, G., & Kelly, M. (2014). Analysis of the Reliability and Validity of a Mentor's Assessment for Principal Internships. *Education Leadership Review*, 15(2), 33–48.
- Lachover, E. (2005). The gendered and sexualized relationship between Israeli women journalists and their male news sources. *Journalism*, 6(3), 291–311.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884905054062>
- Melin, M. (2008). Gendered Journalism Cultures: Strategies and Tactics in the Field of Journalism in Britain and Sweden. In Null: Vol. null.
- Mellado, C., Humanes, M. L., & Márquez-Ramírez, M. (2018). The influence of journalistic role performance on objective reporting: A comparative study of Chilean, Mexican, and Spanish news. *International Communication Gazette*, 80(3), 250–272.

- <https://doi.org/10.1177/1748048517711673>
- Mendes, K., & Carter, C. (2008). Feminist and Gender Media Studies: A Critical Overview. *Sociology Compass*, 2(6), 1701–1718. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9020.2008.00158.x>
- Mohajan, H. K. (2017). Two Criteria for Good Measurements in Research: Validity and Reliability. *Annals of Spiru Haret University. Economic Series*, 17(4), 59–82. <https://doi.org/10.26458/1746>
- Mwesige, P. G. (2004). Disseminators, advocates and watchdogs: A profile of Ugandan journalists in the new millennium. *Journalism*, 5(1), 69–96. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884904039556>
- Okono, N. A. N. (2016). University of Nairobi School of Journalism and Mass Communication Women working in the media industry in Kenya: How are they faring? January. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.1.2619.4005>
- Payne, S., Swami, V., & Stanistreet, D. L. (2008). The social construction of gender and its influence on suicide: a literature review. *Journal of Men's Health*, 5(1), 23–35. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jomh.2007.11.002>
- Qaisrani, A., Liaquat, S., & Khokhar, E. N. (2016). Socio-economic and Cultural Factors of Violence against Women in Pakistan A publication of the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI). *Sustainable Development Policy Institute*, 1–24. [https://think-asia.org/bitstream/handle/11540/6823/Socio-economic%26Cultural-Factors-of-Violence-against-Women-in-Pakistan\[W-158\].pdf?sequence=1](https://think-asia.org/bitstream/handle/11540/6823/Socio-economic%26Cultural-Factors-of-Violence-against-Women-in-Pakistan[W-158].pdf?sequence=1)
- Connell, R. W., & Messerschmidt, J. W. (2005). Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept. *Gender and Society*, 19(6), 829–859. <http://www.istor.org/stable/27640853>
- Radu, Wellington S; Chekera, Y. T. (2014). Power, Patriarchy and Gender Discrimination in Zimbabwean Newsrooms. 1–25.
- Ross, K. (2001). Women at Work: Journalism as en-gendered practice. *Journalism Studies*, 2(4), 531–544. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616700120086404>
- Ross, K., Boyle, K., Carter, C., & Ging, D. (2018). Women, Men and News: It's life, Jim, but not as we know it†. *Journalism Studies*, 19(6), 824–845. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2016.1222884>
- Rotter, T. M. (2019). Gender Inequality in Pakistan. Samuels, P. (2016). *Advice on Exploratory Factor Analysis*. Centre for Academic Success, Birmingham City University, June 2.
- Silvestre Cabrera, M., López Beloso, M., & Royo Prieto, R. (2020). The application of Feminist Standpoint Theory in social research. *Investigaciones Feministas*, 17(2), 307–318. <https://doi.org/10.5209/infe.66034>
- Smith, D. E. (1974). Feminist and Gender Theories. BROADENING SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY.
- Steckle, M. (2018). *Situating Feminist Standpoint Theory: Toward a Critical Ontology of Knowledge*. In University of Windsor. <https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/etd/7572/>
- Swigonski, M. E. (1993). Feminist Standpoint Theory and the Questions of Social Work Research. *Affilia*, 8(2), 171–183. <https://doi.org/10.1177/088610999300800203>
- Thorpe, H. (2009). Bourdieu, feminism and female physical culture: Gender reflexivity and the habitus-field complex. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 26(4), 491–516. <https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.26.4.491>
- Tinuke, M. (2014). A Comparative Study of Work-Family Balance of Female Journalists and Nurses. *International Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Sciences*, 7(1), 77–82.
- United Nations. (2011). United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of (Cedaw ) United Kingdom' S Seventh Periodic Report Submitted June 2011 United Nations Convention on the Elimination of (Issue June).
- Wedgwood, N. (2009). Connell's theory of masculinity – its origins and influences on the study of gender. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 19(4), 329–339. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09589230903260001>
- Xue, C. (2008). Critically Evaluate the Understanding of Gender as Discourse. *International Education Studies*, 7(2), 54–57. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v1n2p54>

- Zia, A. (2007). *Media and Gender: Pakistani Perspective*. 16th AMIC Annual Conference, June 25-28.
- Zuiderveld, M. (2011). "Hitting the glass ceiling" - gender and media management in sub-Saharan Africa. *Journal of African Media Studies*, 3(3), 401-415.

- [https://doi.org/10.1386/jams.3.3.401\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1386/jams.3.3.401_1)
- Zumbo, B. D. (2005). Structural Equation Modeling and Test Validation. *Encyclopedia of Statistics in Behavioral Science*, June. <https://doi.org/10.1002/0470013192.bsa654>