



# Statistical Data Analysis Of The Challenges And Expectations Of A Woman Reporter In Pakistani Media: A Situation Analysis In Karachi

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## Abstract

*Journalism is a challenging profession in Pakistan, where women are less encouraged to adopt journalism as their career. This research is designed to address specific issues that a woman reporter faces while reporting in public. The article focuses on the cultural trends and societal acceptance of a woman as a journalist. This research intends to find the extent our society supports and accommodates a woman working as a reporter. This study is the statistical analysis of the working conditions of a woman journalist treading on the streets in Pakistan. The study sheds light on the hurdles faced by a woman reporter in respect of Pakistani culture. Pakistan's society embraces several different cultures, but above all else, Islamic culture prevails. Many pieces of research explored the minimal participation of women in journalism, but there we see less material addressing the cultural issues, which tend to be a considerable hindrance for an individual. The present study with the quantitative statistical approach probes the ground realities in the light of the cultural perspective regarding the motivating or demotivating conditions. The statistical analysis and data entry are completed with the help of SPSS. Pearson's Chi-Square Test clearly shows the positive relationship between gender and social hindrances.*

**Keywords:** *Women reporters, Cultural barriers harassment, monitoring desk, patriarchal society.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Pakistani society is imbued with patriarchal values. The culture of Pakistan has never been openly supportive for women to work independently. Earlier, people were narrow-minded and tended to marry off girls at a younger age.

At the end of the 20th century, women fostered the trend of entering mainstream journalism and challenged the norms. They became editors of newspapers and political magazines. Dr. Ayesha Siddiqa writes articles for the Pakistani newspaper Dawn and Daily Times. She is also the author of several books. Moreover, Razia Bhatti, Sherry Rehman, and Dr. Maleeha Lodhi were also eminent female journalists. Fauzia Shahid became the General Secretary of the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ). There were also Zahida Hina, Rubab Ayesha, and Mariana Babar. Many women journalists from Karachi to Peshawar confirmed an exclusive skill towards governmental, financial, and public problems and have efficiently sharpened in on areas that had formerly stayed ignored. They have shown themselves with investigative, business, human interest, and child-friendly experiences through opinions that men reporters had not moved on. They outlined problems experienced by women. In our society, women working in any field face many problems, like, Editor of Pakistan Times Rubab Saleem (2008) or Miss Salma Naik, the executive head of an NGO Burgard, pointed out that men do not respect working women and they face hardships in getting marriage proposals, their families indirectly suffer too. So women generally avoid going for jobs. She reiterated that family institutions should be made more robust so women could get support from their families to face the world. “Even then, I am optimistic that the present generation would impart better values to their children to make them constructive part of society,” she expressed her wish. (para. 5)

However, as time progresses, society is getting modified, and people’s minds are also getting broader day by day. In the wake of the 21st century, people in Pakistan are more appreciative of a woman who stands with confidence on her own. A significant influx of women is observed in journalism, fighting all hurdles and rivalries coming their way.

Since the private channels were allowed to operate during the Musharraf regime in 2002, the business of media has expanded. From all over the country, the Association of Television Journalists (ATJ) has only 50 women among its 700 or so registered members in the business investment in Karachi. The Karachi Union of Journalists (KUJ) represents over 650 journalists. Among which some 60 women are its members, this makes the ratio of 4:1. According to the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ), the total number of journalists is 18,000 (Altaf, 2013). Gender Discrimination makes uncertainty deep inside a working Woman. It spoils the environment and leaves nothing to achieve, as the charter of the United Nations states that, “UNESCO believes that all forms of discrimination based on gender are violations of human rights and a significant barrier to peace, sustainable development and the achievement of all internationally recognized development goals” (IFJ Executive, 2009).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Acceptance of society is the most needed thing in the way of success. All the struggles of an individual can go in vain if he/she has not earned the acceptance of society for the relevant matter. The same is the question Hardin and Shain (2005) raised in their research study entitled “Female Sports Journalists: Are We There Yet? ‘No.’” yet in the 21st century, although there is a flux of women journalists in sports, they are considered unsuited for the field. The research respondents in the focus group session gave out the findings that gender discrimination, harassment, dearth of promotional opportunities, and salary issues are persistent. The women employees are crucified enough to leave their job when they suffer from overtime late night work and ignorance for the family. The research participants are acutely annoyed because women journalists are treated with less regard to the extent that they feel ‘invisible.’

About 75% of women’s journalists worldwide are experiencing online harassment, and 20% of harassment has been translated into physical attacks, the latest UNESCO study said. It has revealed that 18% of journalists, who participated in the survey, experienced sexual violence, with 49% after facing rough language and 25% of the threat of physical violence. This report includes 901 journalists from 125 countries. Female journalists are also nervous about risks to harm their expert reputation and the image within society via morphed photos and electronic security assaults. Such episodes are becoming progressively sophisticated using the advancements inside Artificial Intelligence. (Tribune, 2021)

In journalism, women are treated in the manner of gender, and the studies make it evident that they are treated differently. Generally, a sport is considered a male-dominated domain. However, the studies show that women are very enthusiastic and interested in entering sports journalism, women’s teams in cricket, football, basketball, women tennis layers, badminton players, etc. So if we have a women’s team for every sport, why act so bizarre about a woman in sports journalism? Sara Ellen Swanson highlights in her study that women journalists face lots of challenges in sports journalism, especially when they enter the locker room. This research paper finds out that many women journalists had quit the jobs because they were dealt inappropriately, sexually harassed, and physically assailed.

Further, the study talks about the changes that have occurred over the past two decades. The changes brought out by the study are that players have ultimately started accepting women as sports journalists and do not act awkwardly on their presence in the locker room. Moreover, the study tells us that women sports journalists still face hardship and difficulty dealing with the audience. Audiences are free to express themselves and are not accounted to any specific training, so they remark and harass female sports reporters (Swanson, 2009).

Dreading mistreatment and confronting dangers to their lives, journalists in Pakistan proceed cautiously. According to Warda Imran, the courageous and robust who suggest daring conversation starters are most in danger at most, through the reality

of life in Pakistan because she lived reality since she has watched phenomenal editorial pieces be erased. Creators are advised to avoid themes that conflict with organizations' inclinations, such as how amazing design houses misuse their workers. (DW, 2021)

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research has adopted the Quantitative research method using the survey as the data collection tool. The survey is conducted at all the newspapers, news agencies, and news channels of Karachi. All the women journalists in all the newspapers, news agencies, and the news channels of Karachi were the targeted population for the survey. The respondents were asked to answer the close-ended questionnaires. The research questions were designed on the Guttman or Cumulative measurement scale.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The exploratory research is conducted in the theoretical base of Liberal feminism theory and the Behavioral management theory.

### **Liberal feminism theory**

The liberal Feminism theory focuses on the equality of men and women in any society, minimizing their gender differences. Judith Lorber (1997) asserts in her paper, "Theoretically, liberal feminism claims that gender differences are not based in biology, and therefore that women and men are not all that different, their common humanity supersedes their procreative differentiation" (p. 9)

The protagonists of Liberal Feminism argue that men and women should also be treated equally under the law when their status in society is based on equality. This theory advocates the rights for women like voting, riddance of sexual harassment, child care responsibility, and job opportunities. (Ruth, 2010)

A true woman who does not forget her culture also does not submit to its rights. "Feminism is always on the list of trends for a while now. Feminism in India always sees a different scenario. A piece of present-day feminism consistently holds conflicting sense to the traditions of Pakistan. When some among the deep-rooted customs are odd, others have been scientifically proven to be expected. The nation has unmistakable traditions in different strata, bringing about vast numbers of ethnic groups. The distinctive traditions had consistently been a factor of marvel and a subject including social study. Moreover, customs have patriarchal phases, comparative or even somewhat more ruthless than the world. (May 2021)

## **OBJECTIVES**

The study's objective is to determine the cultural hurdles a woman journalist faces while carrying out her duty as a reporter in Karachi.

## HYPOTHESIS

Two hypotheses have been devised for the study:

**HA:** Women journalists in Karachi face cultural barriers while carrying out her duty as a reporter.

**Ho:** Women journalists in Karachi do not face cultural barriers while carrying out their duty as reporters.

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

Demonstrating their value in journalism, women are pushing limits combating the unwavering male dominant society in Pakistan. Women in Pakistani media remain victims of constant discrimination in the workplace, with lower wages, poor working conditions, unsafe work, and subject to sexual harassment. Most women also prefer work at the desk rather than fieldwork to avoid late working hours. Nevertheless, the women working out in the field face no more minor hazards than those who stay at the office. The rigid culture and social barriers tend to hurl them off their tracks. The study further probes if the situation differs from the speculations or whether the female reporters have to go through hard times and face hootings, namecalling, and uncooperative behavior while reporting.

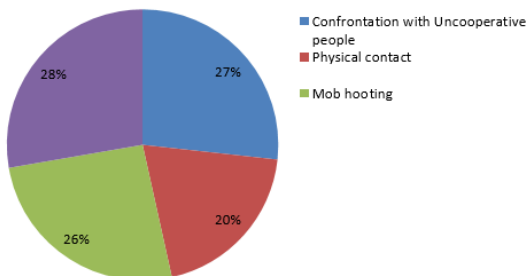
## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Problems while reporting and their causes

Difficulties faced while reporting

	Confrontation with Uncooperative people	Physical contact	Mob hooting	Not at all
Hurdles faced while reporting in the public	27%	20%	26%	28%

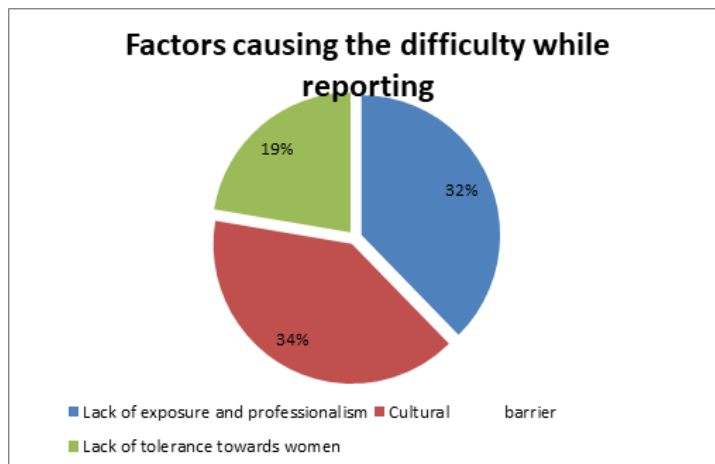
**Hurdles faced while reporting in public**



Pakistani society is a patriarchal society, leading to women being second-class citizens (Mirza 2016, p.27). When women journalists step into society in the form of a reporter, unlike men, she has to face the non-cooperative behavior of the public towards them. The reporters during the survey echoed that many of the time, people zip their mouths towards us and do not talk or answer our questions after giving us a pathetic look. A lesser majority continued with their opinion of people trying to touch and make physical contact revealing the lower mindsets, and their unwelcoming glances make us feel awkward while reporting. Another lesser majority complained about the derogatory remarks they often overhear when the female reporters reach out to the crowd for their view or when the female journalists do the coverage of a rally, mob hooting is one of the most significant impediments. One of the reporters from the survey respondents from a newspaper narrated that the policemen had started stalking her after asking them a query relevant to her beat. They told her to inform her on-call after confirming the information. According to the female journalist, she started to receive frequent calls from the policeman trying to talk and befriend her. On the other hand, a similar lesser majority of the female journalists shared that they never faced any problem while reporting, a respondent Mehak Ali from Channel 24 told the researcher that she had gotten the public’s cooperation and respect whenever she is out for reporting.

### Causes of difficulties while reporting

	Lack of exposure and professionalism	Cultural barrier	Lack of tolerance towards women
Factors causing the difficulty while reporting	32 %	34%	19 %



## INTERPRETATION:

After this research figured out that woman journalists face hindrances while reporting, it is necessary to highlight the causes of those hindrances. According to the majority, the cultural barrier which puts forth the concept of women remaining indoors is the major impediment faced by women journalists. A lesser majority endorsed the hindrance of the cultural barrier by selecting the lack of exposure and professionalism as the keystone of the impediments faced by female journalists. Mostly, women journalists, except for the few ones, are not approaching the audience or the respondents with confidence remarked the reporter Yasmin Taha from the newspaper Ausaf. On the other hand, Mairaj Fatima from the daily Dawn echoed that the lack of professionalism and exposure will take time but eventually will be overcome as today more and more women are joining the journalism profession, one day people will stop behaving awkwardly when a woman journalist shall approach them. Lack of tolerance towards women is another cultural barrier that blocks the passage for a woman journalist to carry out her job peacefully. A minority of respondents reported the lack of tolerance towards women as the cause of their problem while reporting.

### Statistical Analysis

#### Hypothesis:

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	133.446 <sup>a</sup>	48	.000
Likelihood Ratio	46.752	48	.524
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.939	1	.164
N of Valid Cases	47		

Symmetric Measures			
		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	1.685	.000
	Cramer's V	.688	.000
N of Valid Cases		47	

## Interpretation

A chi-square test was run to calculate the statistical value to analyze the cultural hindrances for the women journalists afoot. Here, the p-value is calculated as .000, indicating that the p-value is less than 5 identifying the substantial and significant relationship between gender and cultural barriers. According to the result, the calculated significance value, i.e., P-value, turns out to be 0.000, which appears  $p < 0.05$ , as too insignificant for the null hypothesis to be viable. Thus, our null hypothesis is rejected, establishing that the women journalists in Karachi face cultural barriers while carrying out their duty as a reporter.

## CONCLUSION

In the wake of the advent of Islam, the women were given recognition, appreciation and started voicing their concerns. As journalism is considered the best source of expression of speech, although it is the domain that ran successfully in the male fraternity, women also took part with fervor and ardor. Early on, women took this profession as a mission, they had taken pains of tribulations, ailment, and shortcomings, but they fought against all odds. Be it the middle ages, the 20th century, or the 21st century, and women have partaken in an agile manner.

Problems in journalism have always been on the show. Journalists worldwide have been suppressed, subjugated, and kept down from speaking against the evil in their societies. The dangers in journalism are regardless of gender. Here the study focuses on the problems and dangers that a female reporter faces in Karachi. As for a woman living in a patriarchal society, she first encounters the problem at her home. Upon getting the responses, the study concludes that we are now witnessing a good change in the trend. Many of Karachi's majority, women journalists, was highly appreciated by their families in joining journalism. As seen through this study, the empirical research helps us analyze and understand the situation of the working conditions of women journalists in Karachi.

The study's statistical analysis reveals that today, cultural barriers for women journalists are to a broader extent. According to the bulk of respondents, the women journalists are hindered while reporting and restrained by the rigid culture that does not readily accept women out in the field. By retaining the alternative hypothesis of the study, the study's statistical analysis lays bare the fact that women journalists repeatedly face cultural hurdles like Confrontation with Uncooperative people, physical contact, and mob hooting while carrying out their duties as a reporter.

On the other hand, the research also reveals that according to a few respondents, as time is passing by, modernization is taking place, causing the cultural barrier to diminish, mainly in the urban areas of the country accommodating more women in the field.

There is a need to sensitize society concerning the role of women in journalism. Also to consider how they struggle to reap some benefit of modern-day culture and by unveiling crime and cultural evils, such as honor killings, underage weddings: in



which the people living below the poverty line are forced through their conditions to give the hands of their children to older men, and countless other shoddy practices. Our entertainment channels and also the cinema business is lacking in this regard. No significant TV dramas and movies happen to be produced about how women journalists expose interpersonal evils when confronted with dangers.

## RECOMENDATIONS

The research findings raise the problem about the culturally stringent conditions of Pakistani society towards women journalists. The civic sense of people lying in the dumps needs to be lifted with the help of awareness regarding women's rights and human rights in society. Moreover, women journalists should not lose hope and keep up their morale. With the persistently courageous behavior, they will succeed in changing the flow of society backward one day. They will be able to be widely accepted for reporting and working out on the field.

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