



# GENDER DISPARITY IN PAKISTANI MEDIA

NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY REPORT – 2022

RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY INDIVIDUALLAND

# ABOUT THE PROJECT



This report is developed by Individualland Pakistan (IL) with support of International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) based on research and mapping of gender disparity in the media in Pakistan to better understand and explore the current environment for women in Pakistan's legacy traditional media, and emerging digital media.

## METHODOLOGY

The needs assessment design, development, and analysis were conducted by IL's interdisciplinary research development and assessment team. The administration of the needs assessment was conducted by 3 senior journalists, namely, Fouzia Shahid, Myra Imran, and Rashida Kiani

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The survey aimed at mapping the gender disparity within the media sector in Pakistan, to assess: (a) status of employment of women journalists, (b) working environment and conditions for women journalists, and (c) access of women journalists to decent working conditions catering to their needs w.r.t. Pakistan's laws and commitments.

# OUR RESEARCH TEAM



**FOUZIA SHAHID**

*Senior Journalist*

Special correspondent at PTV News



**MYRA IMRAN**

*Senior Journalist*

Staff Reporter, The News



**RASHIDAH KIANI**

*Senior Journalist*

Correspondent at Geo TV

# Table of Contents

Background and Literature Review.....	5
Needs Based Assessment by Individual and Pakistan.....	8
Methodology.....	8
1. Research Objective.....	9
2. Research Tool.....	9
3. Research Respondents.....	9
4. Limitations to the Research.....	10
5. Research Administration.....	12
Section 1: Key Findings Women Journalists.....	14
Section 2: Key Findings Top Management and Media owners.....	21
Stories from the Field.....	24
Lessons Learnt.....	26
Challenges.....	26
Recommendations.....	27
Conclusion.....	29
Way Forward.....	30

## BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Pakistan's Global Gender Gap ranking (out of 149 countries) in different sectors is 146th in economic participation and opportunity, 139th in educational attainment, 145th for health and survival, and 97th for political empowerment. In 2018 Pakistan was ranked 6th among the list of most dangerous countries in the world for women on the basis of gender-based discrimination, gender exclusive cultural practices, and gender-based violence. In light of these statistics, representation of women in mainstream media remains meagre; in 2000s, the journalists' community in Pakistan was composed of less than 5% women. Although there has been a gradual increase in the number of women journalists in mainstream media in Pakistan post the 2010 growth of print and electronic media houses; however, of the estimated 20,000 professional journalists in Pakistan, less than 1000 are women. This underrepresentation of women, a key segment of society, in media implies the prevalence of gender disparity in media institutions; where there exist institutionalised limitations to access of resources, status and well-being of women media workers as compared to the accommodations extended to men workers.

Women journalists and media workers are contributing from technical roles (production, camera-handling, and editing) to content and feature programming, beside mainstream journalism of covering news stories on social and political fronts. Nevertheless, in a male-dominated sector, while there are exceptional women journalists covering mainstream beats, many women reporters in news media are restricted to covering 'soft' beats traditionally assigned to women. Furthermore, it is pertinent to acknowledge the societal barriers faced by women in this titled career progress (lack of women journalists in management and leadership roles), significant pay-gap, discrimination in provision of basic labor and women's rights (i.e., too little and underpaid maternity leave, childcare facilities.). Therefore, women journalists in mainstream media (print and electronic) are not considered with a gendered approach, enabling an environment where their peer-learning is limited and they face obstacles in linear career progression. In this context, it is essential for women journalists to explore new opportunities on independent media platforms that enable them to monetize their journalistic skills.

---

World Economic Forum (WEF), "The Global Gender Gap Report – 2018", Retrieved from: [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_GGGR\\_2018.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2018.pdf) Date of access: November 1, 2022

Ibid.

Arab News, "Pakistan among four worst nations for women on Global Gender Gap Report", April 1, 2021, Retrieved from: <https://www.arabnews.pk/node/1835591/pakistan> Date of Access: November 1, 2022

6<sup>th</sup> AMIC Conference, Singapore "Media and Gender: Pakistani Perspective" (2007), Brief prepared by Anjum Zia <https://ocd.lcwu.edu.pk/cfiles/Gender%20&%20Development%20Studies/Maj/GDS%20%E2%80%93%20309/GenderandMedia%20PakistaniPerspective.pdf> Date of Access: November 2, 2022

'freedom Network, "Life as a Women in Pakistani Journalism – Threats, Harassment and Rejection", Compiled and developed by Adnan Rehmat, 2018, Retrieved from: <https://fnpk.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Final-Report-Testimonies-Of-Women-journalists-in-Pakistan.pdf> Date of Access: November 1, 2022

European Institute of Gender Equality, Glossary & Thesaurus, "Gender Disparity", retrieved from: <https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/terms/1162#:~:text=Differences%20in%20women's%20and%20men's,law%2C%20justice%20and%20social%20norms> Date of Access: September 30, 2022

6<sup>th</sup> AMIC Conference, Singapore "Media and Gender: Pakistani Perspective" (2007), Brief prepared by Anjum Zia <https://ocd.lcwu.edu.pk/cfiles/Gender%20&%20Development%20Studies/Maj/GDS%20%E2%80%93%20309/GenderandMedia%20PakistaniPerspective.pdf> Date of Access: November 2, 2022

Private media houses have cross media ownerships. They operate under private corporations with non-journalistic backgrounds or media relevance. These media agencies are unaccustomed to the labor rights and code of ethics followed in the field. The Newspaper Employees Conditions of Service Act (NECOSA) was passed in 1973 to protect the rights of all employees and journalists. However, there are many sections that are vaguely implemented by the media houses. The Right to Association is one of the leading points in the UDHR and Pakistan's Constitution. Pakistan also ratified the ILO convention for Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention in 1951. Despite all these commitments, private employees in the media sector do not have the freedom of association without any consequences. The NECOSA also emphasizes on medical facilities and leave provided for employees at their request. However, the employees receive no such benefits on ground. The maternity leave policy for women is not implemented, only extending the leave up to three months. Any person exceeding this limit is at risk of losing their job. Simultaneously, the paternity leave policy for men is little to non-existent when it comes to implementation.

Employees are unable to advance in their careers. There are few opportunities for promotions, increments or benefits which halts their career growth. Pakistan also passed a bill reiterating the equal pay for equal work policy. Employers are required to pay equal allowances to men and women working in the same position. However, the wage disparity between genders in Pakistan tells a different tale. Workplace harassment is another social challenge that has been sidelined by Pakistani organizations. The Punjab Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act was passed in 2012. It encouraged women to report cases of harassment through the department's ombudsperson or the inquiry committees. However, there has been no impactful change over the past ten years. The inquiry committees are headed by few to no women, making the investigation highly biased. Provinces also overlook the importance of an ombudsperson to lead these harassment inquiries. They also tend to overlook the most subtle sexual harassment that women face in workplaces e.g. verbal comments about their choice of clothing, body shaming or ageism. There are a numerous number of cases that go unnoticed or unreported due to the blurred definitions of what is considered harassment. A comprehensive code of ethics should be displayed publicly to understand these blurred lines of workplace harassment. Workplace and field work safety is another factor that is often overlooked by the organization. The recent unfortunate demise of journalist and reporter Sadaf Naeem on 30 October 2022, while on reporting duty has exposed the lack of safety protocols followed by most media houses.

The inspectors from the Labor Department are responsible for making the working environment safe for the employees. However, their lack of monitoring and female inspectors does not help the employees in any way. Employees are not provided any transport facilities or medical insurance to ensure their safety, especially female workers. They are restricted from working in the organizations due to lack of resources. This can lead to any area wide discrimination in workers.

---

<sup>8</sup>Digital Rights Foundation, "Female journalists in new media: Experiences, Challenges and Gendered Approach", retrieved from: <https://digitalrightsfoundation.pk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Female-journalists-in-new-media-experiences-challenges-and-a-gendered-approach.pdf> Date of access: November 1, 2022

<sup>9</sup>JIP, "Media in Pakistan: Women journalists struggle for due recognition", December 14, 2021, retrieved from: <https://www.journalismpakistan.com/media-in-pakistan-women-journalists-struggle-for-due-recognition> Date of access: November 1, 2022

The Implementation Tribunal of Newspaper Employees (ITNE) was established to implement the Wage Board Award but remains ineffective. We can conclude that all necessary for labor rights are present on paper and signed by all concerned authorities. However, due to negligence in monitoring these laws, the implementation process is flawed and needs attention.

## PROJECT OBJECTIVES

---

## NEEDS BASED ASSESSMENT

In order to map the increasing gender disparity in Pakistani media sector, Individualland Pakistan carried out a comprehensive Needs Based Assessment under International Federation of Journalists' (IFJ) project Gender Disparity and Media Mapping. The assessment is based on research and mapping of gender disparity in Pakistani media to better understand and explore the current environment for women in traditional/legacy media as well as emerging digital media. The assessment, conducted via survey with separate sets of stakeholders, entails identification of challenges and issues faced by women journalists' vis-à-vis key elements of gender disparity, i.e. (1) recruitment and retention, (2) allocation of beats, (3) gender based wage disparity, (3) gendered and family-friendly facilities and policies, (4) decision-making positions and roles, and (5) sexual harassment at workplace and its redressing mechanisms.

This report includes; (i) methodology of needs assessment, (ii) quantitative and qualitative analyses of survey (separate for 2 sets of stakeholders), and (iii) overall lessons learnt, challenges, recommendations, conclusions, and way forward ascertained from the findings of the surveys.

### Methodology

The needs assessment design, development, and analysis were conducted by IL's interdisciplinary research development and assessment team. The administration of the needs assessment was conducted by three senior journalists, namely, Fouzia Shahid, Myra Imran, and Rashida Kiani.

## 1. Research Objective

The survey aimed at mapping the gender disparity within the media sector in Pakistan, to assess: (a) status of employment of women journalists, (b) working environment and conditions for women journalists, and (c) access of women journalists to decent working conditions catering to their needs w.r.t. Pakistan's laws and commitments.

## 2. Research Tool

A detailed survey questionnaire with 44 closed and open-ended questions was developed for this purpose. The questions aimed at assessing elements of gender disparity, entailing:

- Recruitment and retention
- Allocation of beats
- Wage gap (disparity in wages)
- Employment status – full time, contract, precarious etc.
- Employment presence by beat, job description, field, office operations
- Training opportunities
- Employment conditions, collective agreements, facilities
- Union membership
- Press club membership
- Representation in decision-making roles at work and in representative organisations
- Sexual harassment at the workplace, existence and functioning of redressal mechanisms
- Safety and security – field reporting, office and online mechanisms

### PROJECT OBJECTIVES

## 3. Research Respondents

The needs assessment was conducted via a survey with two separate sets respondents:

- i. Women journalists associated with media organisations, associations, and unions
- ii. Top management and owners of media organizations

In consideration of the aim of research, i.e. addressing gender discrimination issues of women in Pakistani media; the research ensured that majority of the respondents engaged through the survey were women.

A total of 99 respondents (87 women and 12 men) were engaged via the separate surveys; the respondents' sampling for each set of stakeholders is given below:

## Sampling of Respondents

Convenience and judgment sampling techniques were employed to identify respondents under the two targeted stakeholder groups, including; (1) media employees, and (2) top management, interest groups, Directors, and Union/Association' executives.

### 1) Respondents' Profile for Survey with Women Journalists

The total number of respondents for the first set of survey was 79; of which 3 survey forms were collected from male journalists (the data of these 3 forms has not been included in this report). Thus, the 76 all-women survey respondents included; 62 from Islamabad, 5 from Peshawar, 4 from Karachi, 3 from Quetta, 1 each from Sukkur and Multan.

## Limitations to the Research

---

- The research has limitations w.r.t the sample size of the respondents; due to varying enumerative representation from each province, the research entails an overall picture of gender disparity in media and not province-wise. While it is acknowledged that the level of gender disparity varies in each province; this report does not put emphasis on it.
- The respondents of the survey exhibited reluctance in participating in the survey due to fear of job security and repercussions; therefore, the report does not indicate the names of the media groups the respondents were associated with. Any indication w.r.t respondents' identity has been omitted from the report to maintain confidentiality of the respondents.

## PROJECT OBJECTIVES

---

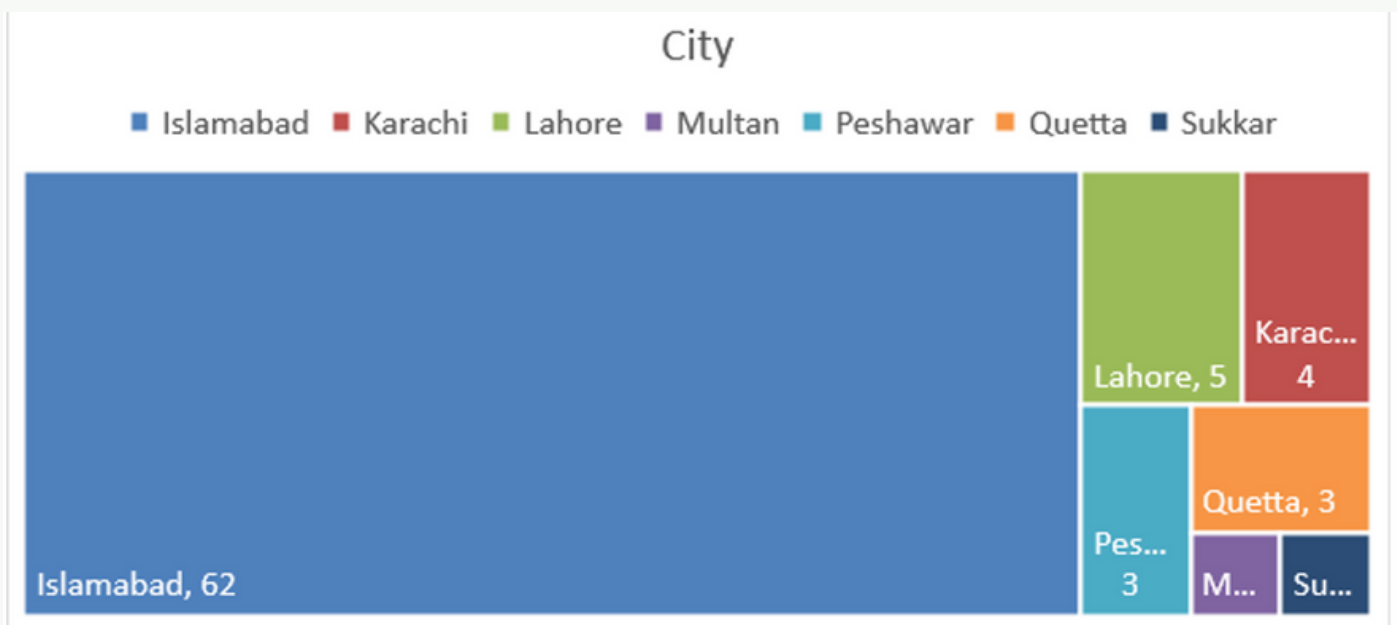


Figure (1): Cities of the Respondents

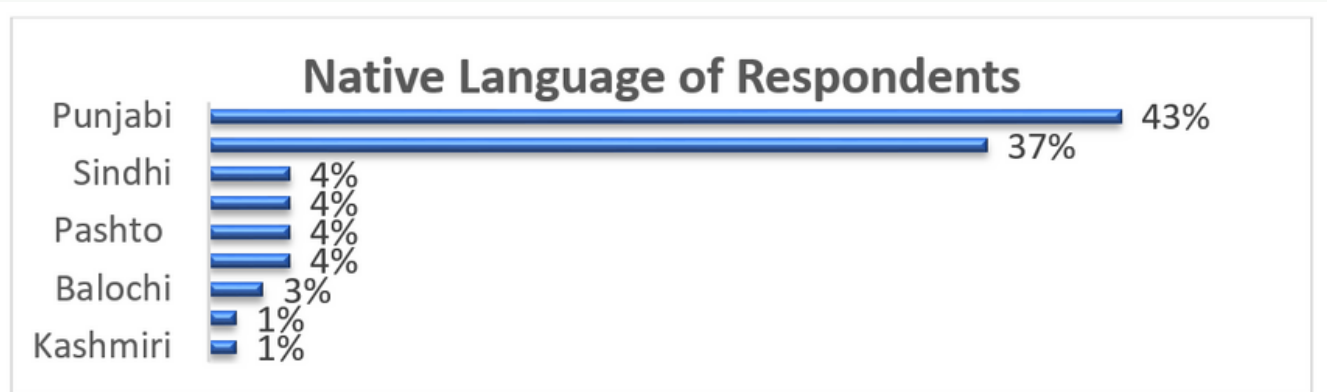
Majority (81%) were employed full time, 9% part time, 9% contractual, while 1% self-employed/freelancer.

City	Contractual	Full Time	Part Time	Self-Employed/Freelance	Total
Islamabad	7	47	7	1	62
Karachi	0	4	0	0	4
Lahore	0	5	0	0	5
Multan	0	1	0	0	1
Peshawar	0	3	0	0	3
Quetta	0	3	0	0	3
Sukkur	0	1	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>79</b>

- The age bracket of respondents was between 22-62 years, with an average of 33 years. Almost three-fourths of the respondents (71%; n=56; all female) belonged to the age group of 22-35 years.
- The respondents were unevenly spread across varying levels of education. The following table describes level of education of the respondents' area wise. 57% have a Master's Degree and 13% have education background higher than Master's (MPhil/PhD). The remaining 11% attended other courses (makeup, designing), and 10% have a Bachelor's Degree, lastly, 5% are secondary school pass. As for a journalism degree/certificate only 3% reside in this bracket.

<i>Education Level of the Respondents (District-wise)</i>							
City	Bachelor	Higher (MPhil/PhD)	Journalism degree	Master Higher (MPhil/PhD)	Other	Secondary	Total
Islamabad	6	10	2	32	9	3	62
Karachi	1	1		2			4
Lahore				5			5
Multan				1			1
Peshawar				2		1	3
Quetta	1			2			3
Sukkur				1			1
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>79</b>

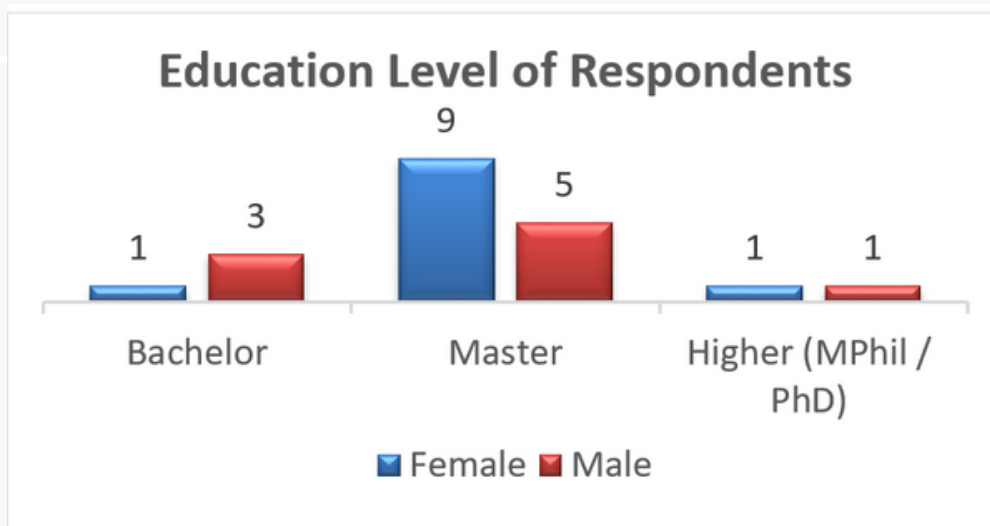
- 43% are Punjabi speakers, 37% speak Urdu, 4% communicate in Sindhi, 4% in Saraiki, 4% in Pashto, 3% in Balochi, and 1% Potohari, lastly, another 1% speak Kashmiri. Regarding domicile, 32% have Federal Area Domicile, 29% have a Punjab domicile, 6% are having a Rawalpindi Domicile, 6% belong to Sindh, 5% to Peshawar, 4% belong to Chakwal, 3% are from Quetta, and 1% from each district in which, Bahawalpur, Baluchistan, Dadu, Faisalabad, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Kashmir, Khuzdar, Lahore, Bhakkar, DG Khan and Sukkur are included.



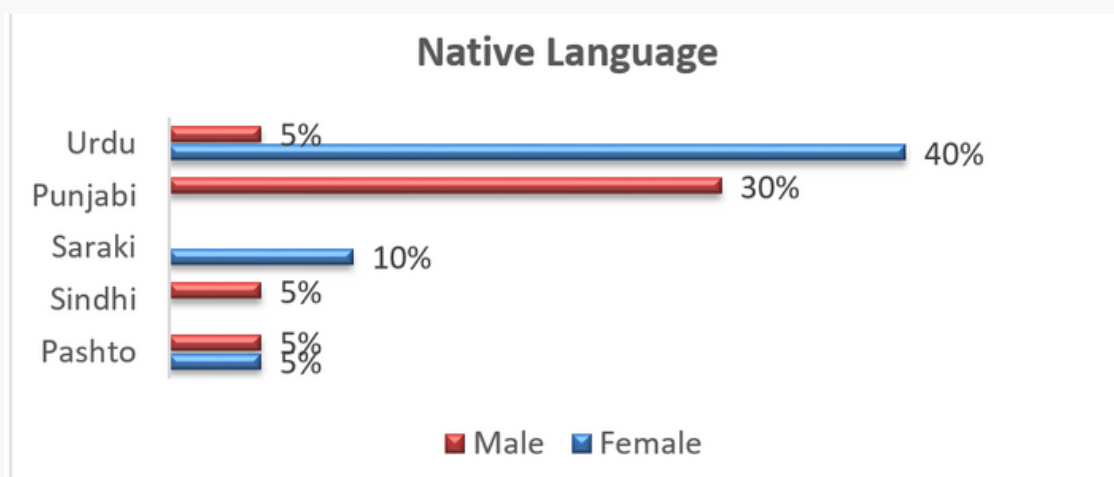
## 2) Respondents' Profile for Survey with Top Management and Media Owners

A total of 20 respondents (female-11 & male-9) were engaged through the second set of surveys, i.e. survey with top management and media owners, including; 9 (female-1 & male-7) Islamabad, 7 (all female) Karachi, 2 (all Female) Lahore, 2 (all Male) Rawalpindi, and 1 (female) Multan.

- The age bracket of interviewees was between 32-62 years, with an average of 42 years. All the respondents have a lot of experience with average of 16 years (Min-5 & Max-31).
- The respondents were unevenly spread across varying levels of education. The following table describes level of education of respondents across gender. From total, 20 (n=14; female-9 & male-5) have done Master's, 4 (female-1 & male-3) have Bachelor's Degree, and 2 (female-1 & male-1) with a Higher (MPhil/PhD) level of education.



- 45% (female-40% & male-5%) of the respondents are Urdu speakers, 30% (all male) are Punjabi, 10% (all female) Seraiki, 5% (all male) Sindhi, while 10% (female-5% & male-5%) are Pashto speakers.



- Regarding domiciles; 35% (female-30% & male-5%) have Sindh domicile, 25% (female-5% & male-20%) have Punjab Domicile, 10% (female-5% & male-5%) are having Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Domicile, 10% (female-5% & male-5%) are from Lahore, 5% from Sialkot (all male), 5% from Multan (All female), and 5% (all female) with a Karachi domicile.

#### 4. Research Administration

The surveys were administered by three researchers; senior journalists selected through gender equity program.

##### Target Districts:

- The survey with women journalists was conducted in 7 cities across Pakistan, namely; Islamabad, Karachi, Peshawar, Lahore, Quetta, Sukkur, and Multan.
- The survey with top management and media owners (women and men) was conducted in 5 districts, namely; Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, Rawalpindi, and Multan

### Mode of Survey Administration:

- The survey with both women media employees, and top management and media organization owners was conducted telephonically.

#### Challenges to Survey Administration

- Field researchers faced issues in ascertaining availability of the respondents due to their official commitments, e.g. field coverage of floods, etc.; therefore, scheduled time slots were acquired from the respondents.
- Many respondents were located outstation; therefore, to avoid long travel constraints, the

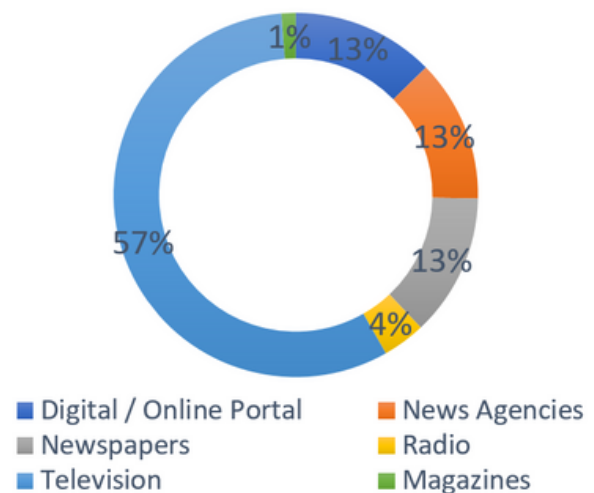
Timeline: Surveys with both sets of stakeholders was conducted from August to September, 2022.

### Section I: Key Findings of Survey with Women Journalists

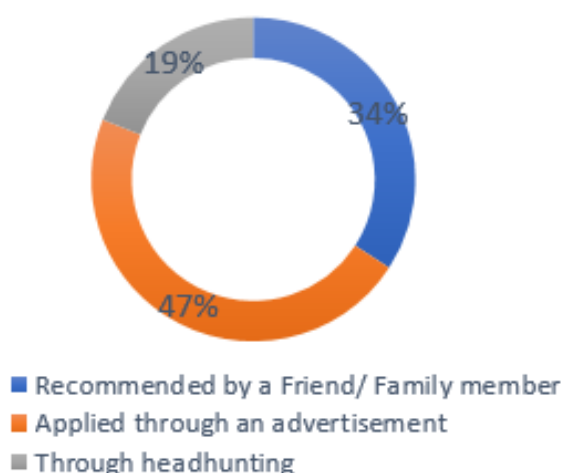
#### a) Employment Status and Recruitment

- All of the respondents are working in the field of media.
- On average the work experience of the respondents is 9 years. (Min-1 & Max-25)
- 57% of the respondents are working for Broadcast television, 13% for News Agencies, 13% for digital/online portals, 4% for Radio, while 1% of the respondents are working for Magazines.
- 47% of the women mentioned that they had applied to their respective associated media organisations through advertisements, 34% stated that they were recommended by a friend or a family member, while 19% mentioned that they were selected through headhunting.

**Media Source Worked For**



## Selection Process



- Majority of the respondents were satisfied with the selection process, 10% stated their dissatisfaction, and the last 3% had no answer. The respondents who were not satisfied had applied through an advertisement and recommended by a friends/family. All those who were recruited through headhunting were satisfied with the selection process.
- All respondents who were selected through advertisement and were satisfied with the selection process mentioned that they were hired on merit basis after they applied through advertisements, they gave proper tests and interviews, some of the respondents landed a job directly after their internships ended, while government employees were selected through government selection processes.
- Those who were not satisfied reported that it is often a very lengthy and wearisome process for women; they stated that the recruiters select male candidates directly after a basic interview. One of the respondents mentioned that certain backdoor approaches were made for their jobs.
- Three reported that even though they had experience, they were still not paid the appropriate amount/salaries, on the basis of the fact that they were recommended by a friend or a family member. One respondent mentioned that they were not paid because they don't have any personal link or approaches to various ministers or top management.
- 47% of the respondents reported that it was not easy to get the job, due to the following reasons:

Level of Access to Jobs		
S#	Reason	Value
1	Need References for the job	High
2	Have to have government background for a job	High
3	Less jobs in media	High
4	Competition	High
5	Less jobs opportunity in Islamabad	Medium
6	Internal politics, political grouping	Medium
7	Favouritism	Low
8	Long government process	Low
9	Need to use family references	Low
10	Less opportunity for females	Low

- 53% of the respondents were satisfied with the selection process due to the following reasons:

Satisfaction Level of Respondents with Recruitment/ Selection Process		
S#	Reason	Value
1	Job directly after internship	High
2	Recommended by friends and family members	High
3	Selected through headhunting	High
4	Jobs are available for fresh graduates	Medium
5	Lucky to get job directly after graduation	Medium
6	Extra experience	Medium
7	Husband reference	Low
8	Through proper selection process.	Low
9	Easily got job, because it was start of the channel	Low

- 75% of the respondents mentioned that women faced difficulty in getting jobs in a media organization, 23% disagreed, while 2% had no reply.

Faced difficulty while getting job		
S#	Reason	Value
1	Because we live in a male dominant society, a smaller number of females in media organizations	High
2	More competition within female	High
3	Women are called for personal meetings instead of professional work sexual harassment at workplace	High
4	Fewer jobs available	High
5	Required references in jobs	Medium
6	Internal politics, political grouping	Medium
7	Favouritism	Low
8	Women less in decision making position (Top Management)	Low
9	Society discourages women for jobs in Media	Low
10	Rigid environment in KP/interior Sindh/Punjab	Low

#### b) Decision-Making Positions

Regarding the overall number of decision-making positions; 61% of respondents (all women) mentioned that they were not aware of who is in decision-making positions in their respective organisations/ press clubs/ unions. The remaining 39% revealed that on average there are 12 personnel in the decision-making role (per organisation/union/press club - with minimum 2 and maximum 40 personnel in the position); on average 10 men and 2 women are in decision-making positions.

#### c) Gender Policy

- 49% of the media organizations do not have a gender policy, 41% said that their organization had devised a policy, while 10% were not aware of the existence of a gender policy in the organization.

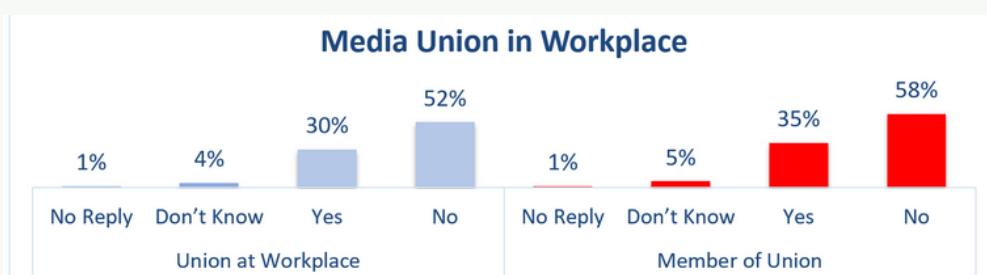
- Regarding whether there was a gender policy in place, 43% respondents answered No, 42% said Yes; 14% said they don't know while 1% of the respondents didn't answer. Out of total, 37% of the media staff were oriented on the gender policy, in which 28% stated that the gender policy is useful and acted upon within the organization and that everyone adapted to it.



- For Contribution of gender policy to gender equity 57% answer was yes, 24% said that we don't know, 16% mentioned No, while 3% didn't give any answer.

#### d) Media Union at Workplace

- More than half of the respondents reported they didn't have a media union at their workplace, while 30% said that they do have a union for journalists. Of those who had a media union at the workplace, only 35% were members of the union whereas 58% are not a part of it, the remaining respondents were not aware of any Unions at their workplace. 59% of the women stated that the professional associations and unions were not playing a substantive role for gender equity in the organization.
- Regarding government's role in gender equality, 56% stated that the government is playing no functional role, 25% said they were aware of some work associated with the government, however, 10% said they don't know and 9% did not answer the question. Majority of the respondents said that there is no government rule for private media, and they are not taking any action or engaging in proper monitoring. Some respondents stated that every government has their special and assigned media groups that they catering to, since they promote and help boost their news.
- The data shows that 59% of the organizations don't have a promotional policy for women workers, 27% of the women said they do have a policy, while 14% were not aware of it. Furthermore, 29% of the respondents mentioned that their organization/press club/union had a fixed quota/reserved seats for women, while the remaining answered "No" (52%) and "don't know" (19%).



- The employees of the media organization were not aware (67%) about the organization's retention policy for women, while 33% had a positive response.
- Regarding job security within the organization in which they were working, 52% had positive answers, while 48% had negative responses. All those who were satisfied with their job security gave the following reasons: permanent job, government employee, and without any solid reasons no one can ask to quit the job. While those who were not feeling secure gave the following reasons: downsizing, project base job, contract, terminated without any reasons (no rules and regulation of Human Resource Management & no termination policy), and always have to maintain good professional terms with the superior/manager.

#### e) Organization Environment

- 48% of the respondents reported that they have a separate workplace/special cabins or rooms (keeping in view the cultural values) for women in Press Club/Union/Organization.
- 84% of the respondents reported that they have separate washrooms in the organization.
- 57% of the Organizations/Press Clubs/Union offices do not provide facility of crèches/day care/lactating assistance, among all those only 18% are satisfied with the standards, while the others mentioned that need improvement.
- 57% of the Organizations/Press Clubs/Unions provide a dropping home service at night, specifically to women, while 43% of them don't have this facility.
- 70% of the organizations/press club/union provides paid maternity leaves, while 24% also provide paternity paid leaves.
- 70% of the organization/Press Club/Union do not provide any other Family friendly facilities. The remaining workers were not aware, or didn't know.

#### f) Monthly Salary/Income

- Monthly income/salary varies from field to field and with experience, 34% stated that they have a monthly income of 25,000 to 40,000, 32% answered 40,000 to 75,000, 18% said 75,000 to 100,000, 14% said 100,000 to 150,000, while 1% from 150,000 to 200,000 PKR. Also, 54% of the respondents stated that their organizations had an equal policy of pay for males and females, while 35% said that the organizations are paying more to males due to discrimination and 11% said that they don't know about other's salaries/income.
- All the respondents had different beats/subjects. 39% have a politics beat and international affairs, 27% are performing desk work, 15% are covering gender related issues while remaining are all busy in different beats such as being related to children, education, health, business economy, environment, and makeup of the guests.

- Out of all the respondents only 20% had the privilege of choosing their own beat, while all others are bound to work on what they are given due to:
  - o Because boss/sir/bureau of chief (top management) assigned this beat to me
  - o Assigned by desk, bound to follow instruction
  - o Director news
  - o In my job description
  - o Women are normally given soft beats.

#### g) Sexual Harassment in Workplace

- Almost half, 43% respondents said that they faced sexual harassment in some form. 57% of respondents stated that they did not encounter any sexual harassment at their workplace or work-related spaces till now. 63% of the employee's answers regarding the prevention of sexual harassment policy at workplace was positive, while 33% said that their organization don't have any such kind of policy, 3% answered that they didn't know and 1% didn't reply.
- Regarding organization committee setup under the law on prevention of sexual harassment with a female member 62% said yes, 30% answered no, while the remaining said they do not know, or had not responded. 41% of them mentioned that everybody is aware/oriented/trained on harassment policy within organization, 46% answered No, while 13% of them were not aware about it and answered they didn't know.
- 56% of the organization have a redressal mechanism against harassment, 25% said their organization do not have any redressal system, 18% did not know, while 1% refused to answer.
- 46% stated that the redressal mechanism is functional and effective, 34% answered negative, while 20% answer did not know.
- 30% encountered/faced bias based on their minority identity, tribal identity, geographical location, and language within organizations,
  - o Difficult for Urdu speaker in Pashto area
  - o On the base of ethnicity
  - o On my dressing, being bold
  - o People had a different mindset.
  - o In Multan, the city environment is conservative, my cameraman feels ashamed to go with me, once he said to cover my head with scarf and refused to go for coverage next time without it
  - o People are not treating me good when they come to know that I am Pathan.

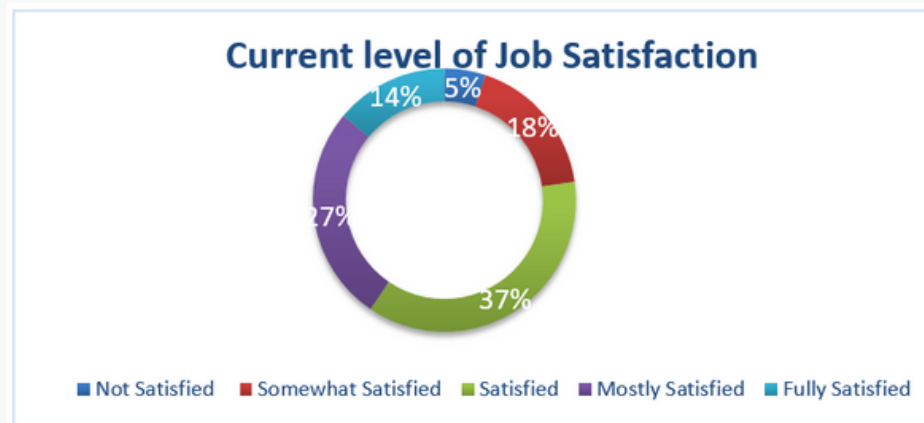
#### h) Health Insurance

- 72% said that the organization has an employee health and safety policy.
- 57% of the respondents reported that organization have provided health and life insurance.
- 76% of the employees said that their office is established in an easily accessible/secure location for women.

- 46% of the respondents stated that the organization have an equal opportunity policy or equivalent, to ensure non-discrimination against any type of demographic group including women.
- 63% of the respondents stated that the organization don't have a separate policy on diversity or inclusion, 19% said yes, while other answered they didn't know.

i) Level of Satisfaction

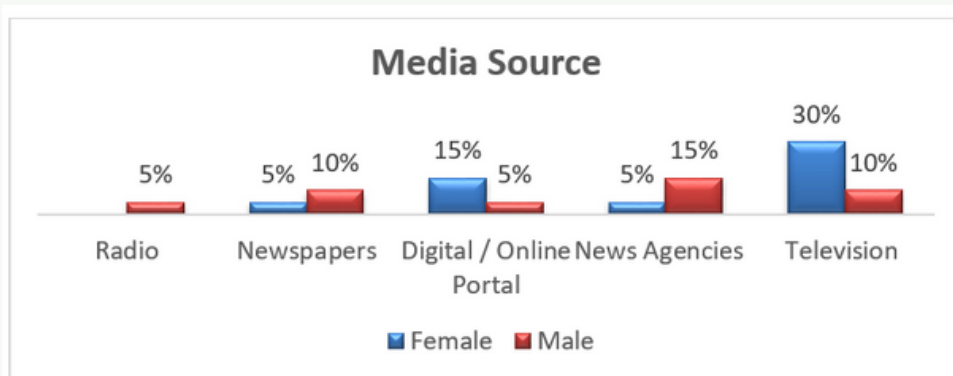
- Regarding level of satisfaction, 5% are not satisfied, 18% are somewhat satisfied, 37% satisfied, 27% mostly satisfied, and 14% are fully satisfied.



## Section 2: Key Findings of Survey with Top Management and Media Owners

### a) Media Employees All Women

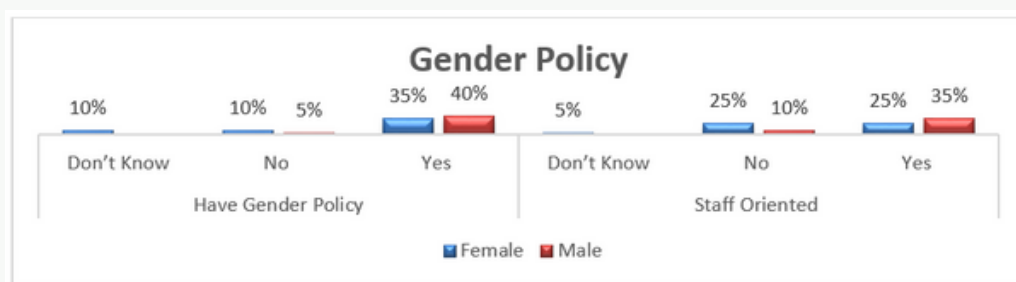
- All (100%; female-55% & male-45%) of the respondents are doing work for media.
- 40%; female-30% & male-10% are from television sector, 20% (female-5% & male-15%) from news agencies, 20% (female-15% & male-5%) are on digital/online portals, 15% (female-5% & male-10%) work in newspapers, while 5% (all male) are working for radio.



- 90%; male-35% & female-55%) of the respondent stated that they prefer women for different job openings at media organizations, while 10% (all male) answered no.

### b) Gender Policy

- 70%; female-35% & male-40% of the respondents reported that the media organizations have a gender policy. 60%; female-24% & male-35 stated that they were oriented on the gender policy. 90% (female-50% & male-40%) stated that organization have a policy on prevention of sexual harassment at workplace.
- 70% of the respondents (female- 35% & male-40%) said that the organisations' staff are oriented on the policy on prevention of sexual harassment at their organizations workplace.

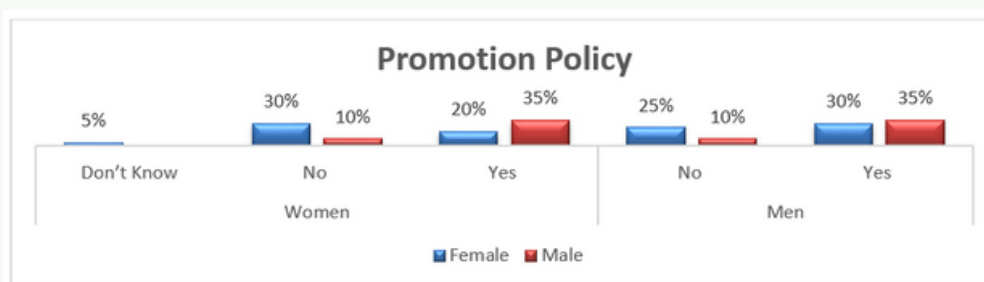


- 75% (female-35% & male-40%) stated that they found both the policies useful and acted upon, within the organization, while remaining (25%; female-20% & male-5%) were not satisfied with the policies, due to the following reasons:
  - o Policies are designed beautifully on paper, but not being implemented on ground.
  - o There is no gender policy. We don't need one as there is no discrimination against women.
  - o Women of our organization are more empowered and confident

- 80%; female-35% & male-45%) of the respondent's perception was that having these policies in the organization will contribute to gender equity.
- Regarding contribution of professional associations and union's role for gender equity majority have negative impression about it, just 35% (female-10% & 25% male) said that these associations are plying a positive role for gender equity.
- 40% (female-10% & 30% males) answered positively regarding government's substantive role for gender equity, while remaining answered negative due to the following reasons:
  - o Government has policies but not ready to implement it.
  - o Government is unable to fix the women quota for women, not any policy for equal job for women
  - o Government could not make any such law for women which can lead them towards key positions
  - o No incentives given to women, so they don't continue their jobs very long
  - o Government fails to implement employment quota in Government offices, it will may be taken years and years to work for private sectors
  - o He has never come across with any such information from government
  - o Don't know of any policy, government for gender equity in government media
- Those who mentioned that the government is playing a positive role in gender equity gave the following justifications:
  - o Equal opportunity for both males and females
  - o Government gives equal opportunities to both males and females; smooth environment of work and different organizations keeps a check and balance on it.
  - o Government has made couple of laws and policies for gender equality just lack with awareness campaigns, Government has established ombudsperson offices at all provinces to address harassments issue
  - o Quota in jobs are exists, policies are on ground, awareness campaigns

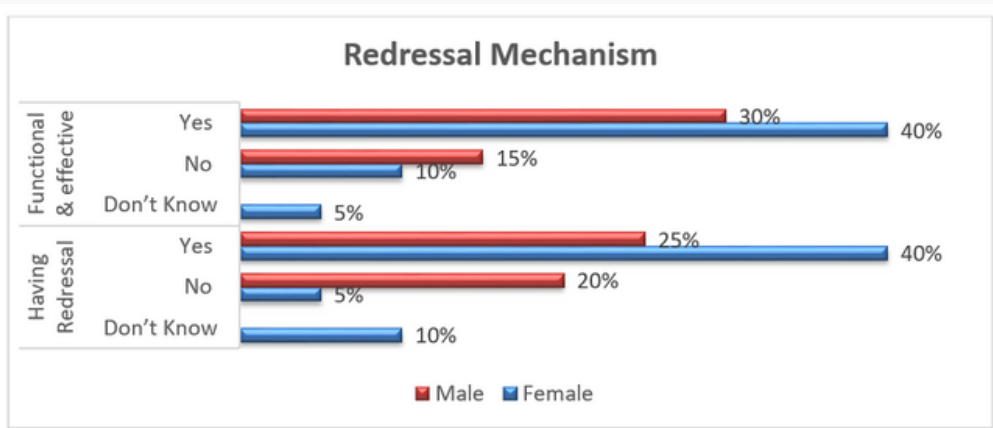
### c) Promotion Policy

55% (female-20% & Male-35%) stated that they have promotion policy for women, while 65% (female-30% & Male-35%) said that their organization has a promotion policy for males also. Men have more (10%) promotion policy compared to female.



#### d) Redressal Mechanism

70% (female-40% & male-30%) stated that they have redressal mechanisms within the organizations, while 65% (female-25% & male-40%) stated that these redressal mechanisms of gender policy in the organization are functional and effective.



## Stories from the Field

The 3 field researchers shared additional in-depth stories of the respondents as case studies based on gender based violence, gender based discrimination, and sexual harassment & misuse of authority. \*Names have been changed to maintain confidentiality of respondents

### Gender based Violence in Media

Hira\*, a field reporter from Multan, has been working in media for over a decade. The number of women journalists in Multan is negligible; therefore, the conservative media environment in the city poses Hira with a new challenge every day. She narrated an incident; while working on the field, one fellow media personnel (photojournalist) policed her attire and impolitely told her to cover her head. She recounted that it felt offensive and therefore, she told him that her attire was not anyone else's concern. Considering that the photojournalist was not her colleague, she ignored the incident and did not report to anyone. Hira mentioned that a few days after the incident, she was covering an event for a news story; the same photojournalist was present there. She said that while she was focused on doing her job, the photojournalist slapped her and said; *"My honour does not allow a girl to work among men without covering her head"*. After the second incident, she reported to her manager; she was reassured that it will be reported to the relevant editor. Hira mentioned that the photojournalist was only given a formal warning, but no action was taken against him.

### Gender based Discrimination and Sexism in Media

Kiran\* is a Karachi based journalist and has been working as a senior producer in a TV channel for 8 years now. Kiran mentioned that as a senior producer she is not allowed extra leaves during the week. She said that when she was carrying a high-risk pregnancy; her doctor had prescribed her weekly infusions. She told her supervisor that she would need to take short leaves from work; however, he exhibited displeasure and told her to manage her tasks before going on a short leave. She narrated an instance where she had completed her task and left for the hospital on a half-day leave; while she was getting her IV, she got a phone call from her supervisor to return to the office as another colleague had to leave because of an emergency. She excused the supervisor, telling him that she had completed her task before leaving and was in the middle of her treatment. She said that her supervisor reacted in an impolite manner asking her to choose between her professional and personal life. Her supervisor's behaviour perturbed her, and she decided to resign the next day. She said that the next morning, the Director News requested her not to resign, but try to manage her work responsibilities. She mentioned that she stayed at the same organisation, but she has since faced a lot of impatience and sexist remarks from her male colleagues regarding her weekly short leaves. She recounted one sarcastic sexist remark, when a male colleague told her that there should be no jobs for women in media because they get pregnant and then ask for leaves every other day.

### **Sexual Harassment and Misuse of Authority:**

Aneela\* is working as an Assistant Producer for a current affairs show in one of Islamabad-based media houses for the last 5 years. She stated that there are no separate washroom facilities for women in her workplace, and thus, she has to share the washroom with one of her superior male colleagues. She mentioned that her male colleague does not lock the door while using the washroom; there have been more than one instance when she thought the washroom was vacant and she entered while he was using it. Aneela said that she could not report to anyone or even share with her colleagues as she felt embarrassed. She further stated that she has been asked to not use the washroom's recycle bin when she is on her monthly menstrual cycle; thus, she has to take used sanitary pads home to discard them. Unfortunately for Aneela, she said that her superior male colleague has the authority to hire and dismiss his team members; so to stay employed, she has to compromise with this situation.

## Lessons Learnt

There needs to be a thorough understanding and awareness of the rights given and protected by various national and international organizations for the protection of Media workers such as, Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors, Pakistan Broadcasters Association, Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists, ITNE (Implementation Tribunal for Newspaper Employees), International Federation of Journalists, Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), Pakistan Journalist Association (PJA), Reporters without Borders (RSF). These organizations do exist; however, various journalists do not possess strong awareness and especially as these women lack awareness it is learnt that; they cannot protect themselves from these complications. Moreover, the role of unions is absent, this needs to be enhanced and even if there are women who have become a part of the unions, more work and assessment needs to be done on their leadership skills.

## Challenges

The report highlights various factors regarding disparity, and highlights the enormous challenge ahead to encourage women to higher posts and workplace positions. Firstly, due to the lack of rock-solid policies, and then as evident from our data, due to the lack of awareness it can be challenging for women to speak up if they are not perceptive of what's wrong in the ladder of their work. Overcoming this gap overall in the country is a vast responsibility. Another challenge that can be drawn from the analysis is to create more opportunities for women and young girls on leading roles in organizations. Moreover, to increase the presence of women, men need to give up top positions which in itself is challenging even if the woman completely is on merit. The mind-set that woman are not capable of top positions needs to be addressed to make the environment easier for them to work in as mentioned above in the case of maternity leaves and child-care. However, women need to be trained appropriately so they can deliver the same quality of work even if they are lagging behind in other aspects. Furthermore, it's a challenge to engage higher management in addressing the gender gap disparity.

## Recommendations

Women are struggling for their rights but it's a long journey, women are capable of making informed decisions given enough training and confidence, hence, it is beneficial if they raise their voices for their rights. The following recommendations emerge on the basis of the findings in this report:

- A key finding of the study is the difficulty faced by women journalists in attaining job opportunities due to lack of women in decision-making positions. Moreover, the findings suggest there is a need to change mindsets that believe in not hiring married women, and that women do not perform well in management positions. Therefore, in order to tackle this challenge, it is recommended that the gender policy of the media organization should ensure minimum 50% representation of women in top management and decision-making positions alongside having a decent number of female staff members.
- The results show that more than half of the respondents do not have access to facilities like day-care, nursing rooms, separate washrooms, etc. In order to ensure that women demonstrate their competence at work, it is recommended that these facilities be ensured for them to stay available at work and for their children when needed.
- It is recommended, that under the Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, and provincial Sexual Harassment Act(s), the media organisations establish a gender committee to deal with any harassment complaints and ensure effective implementation.
- A key finding is that the recruitment process is often biased against women; therefore, it is recommended that the recruitment process be completely based on merit, and ensure equal opportunity policy for women.
- The finding that 35% of the respondents mentioned that their male colleagues on equal positions are paid more than them is alarming; it is recommended that an equal pay policy is in place with a general salary package for positions/roles (with no gender perception).
- Regarding policies and management positions; many respondents exhibited a lack of awareness . Therefore, it is recommended that all relevant policies be informed to the employees at induction stage, as well as displayed within the office premises.
- The research implies that media unions and associations do not play an effective role in dealing with gender disparity; therefore, it is recommended that media unions be strengthened with gender sensitive policies to ensure that they play a role in improving working conditions for all employees, especially women.
- Considering that the findings show lack of existence, or proper implementation of gender policies, promotion policies, health insurance policies safety protocols, etc.; it is recommended that national level SOPs and guidelines be charted by government authorities that are mandatory for media organisations to adopt and implement.
- Special measures for job security need to be taken in order for the employees to access their right to a safe and friendly work environment.

## Conclusion

The data analysis presented above substantiates the fact that the field of media, though quite diverse and vast in terms of responsible journalism and communication, the same cannot be said about the job market. Strictly on the subject of Gender Disparity, the overall job market of Pakistan in media is very restricted and controlled. The work is done in a classified environment with little to no progress for majority of the female-workers. Majority of the women are very much unaware of their rights, as much as the unawareness counts towards the wider disparity gaps, more situations arise that force these women to stay inside the cocoon. Due to job security, as presented above as well, the women stay bound, even forced, to respect whatever environments that they are given.

Furthermore, one can argue that in this digital age (YouTube and other streaming platforms), one can open up their own digital space for journalism or to create community impact media content; but, it's evident that most of the freelance workers aren't earning all that well. If one has to run a house-hold or feed their children, it's fairly impossible to earn a handsome amount online to make ends meet. Even if, TV channels hire freelance videographers or as such content creators, most of the time it is carried out on the bases of volunteerism and that these people are not always paid for their work. Hence, if journalism is your bread and butter, it is clear that these women have limited choices for work. Even the concept of minimum wage is not implemented for the freelancing community. As for those, who observably have a permanent/government employment, even they can be held back in various different ways such as, not allowing increments on salary, or not paying on the basis of merit, etc. Even as the researchers were carrying out their research, many women were not willing to disclose their names as they were scared of losing their jobs.

As for 'hard' beats (such as Politics, Foreign Affairs, etc.) in journalism, which is arguably one of the high paying spheres in media, where a journalist, can not only earn more, but can build better networks is rarely ever given to women, partly due to the fact that it's a rather male-dominated field as for timings of the job can fall upon odd hours of the day; women are still lagging behind. Organizations for the protection of media workers such as, ITNE (Implementation Tribunal for Newspaper Employees), International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ), Pakistan Journalist Association (PJA), Reporters without Borders (RSF), etc, do exist however;

various journalists are not aware. As these women lack in awareness, they cannot protect themselves from atrocities. Moreover, the role of unions is inadequate, this needs to be enhanced and even if there are women who have become a part of the unions, more work needs to be done on their leadership skills.

The key findings from the surveys also suggest that those women who were not satisfied with the selection processes for the jobs stated the continuation of very lengthy procedures; which are for female candidates only, and that male candidates go through the selection process without such hassles. Moreover, some women also reported that even though they had prior experience of working in the media/journalism industry, they were still discriminated on the basis of gender when it came to salaries. However, for those who said they are not satisfied with the selection processes also reported that due to lack of availability of media jobs, the competition for females become even higher.

It should also be noted that the women who exhibited satisfaction over selection process had secured their jobs by either headhunting, or through personal references. As for Gender Policies within organizations, less than 50% stated they are somewhat aware of the policies however, out of the total only 37% said that the media staffs were oriented on the gender policy, in which 28% stated that gender policy is useful and acted upon within organization.

The data suggests that gender policy is not being implemented due to the lack of gender policy officially provided from the government, it seems as if the policies are just a facade but no appropriate implementation has taken place. Women are still restricted to work on typical women-related issues and if they come up with innovative ideas, these ideas are dismissed. This implies the need for strengthened policies in place to tackle the disparity concern. Although 70% of the media personnel in top management positions stated they have a gender policy however only 65% stated that the redressal mechanisms of gender policy in the organization are functional and effective. Based on the findings from the surveys collected, it indicates that more work needs to be done in regards to tackling Gender Disparity in Media workplace.

## Way Forward

Based on the key results, the following steps are outlined below to pave ways towards reducing the gender disparity gap in media sector of Pakistan:

### 1. Standardized Gender Policy and other SOPs

As stated above, the following points need to be addressed while drafting a policy.

- Top positions should be given to female workers if they are competent.
- Gender equality in all department and all bureau
- To value women in decision making
- Acceptance of women that they are as competent as men
- Treat women as equal human beings
- Women need Equality, Empowerment, Decision Making Positions
- Merit should be followed.

## **2. Organize Workshops based on Gender Disparity in Media. (Training/Capacitating media owners)**

Pertaining to Dissecting Concepts of Gender, Mapping nexus between Gender and Media, Recruitment and Retention, etc. The workshops can also compose of mentee-relationship with various high profile/senior journalists to create a space for women.

## **3. Awareness Campaigns.**

As stated by the survey findings, many women were not even aware of any Gender Policy or its need in their organization. These materials will be designed in consultation with the stakeholders to keep these specific, informative and culturally acceptable.

## **4. Use of Local Media Press Clubs.**

Without use of media the awareness campaigns will not be that much effective. Local media houses and press clubs must be used for mass awareness, to highlight the needs, gaps and issue and to use media to bridge the gender gap.

