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Issues in Journalistic Practices: Security and sociological Perspective

ABSTRACT

Journalistic practices have always been remained a researchable debate among the researchers. The power in hand of the journalists to reveal the truth has increased the importance of the topic. This study is focused on exploring the issues faced by the journalists while their professional practices in Pakistan whereas, social issues in result of the journalistic practices. Primary and secondary sources were applied for the purpose of data collection. The method of exploratory quantitative survey was applied to reach out the results. The outcomes of the study found the journalists dissatisfied with their jobs due to the long working hours and hectic routines meanwhile, dissatisfaction level had badly affected their social circles. It was also contributed that the journalists were facing difficulties in their professional practices.

Keywords: *Journalistic Practices, Sociological Perspectives, Satisfaction, Security of Journalists, Family Security*

Introduction

Profession of Journalism

Media has recognized its presence as fourth pillar of the society in all over the world. Revealing the truth and representation of the voice of a common individual are the major responsibilities of the media (Nadadur, 2007). Under developing countries are developing the standards of the journalists as well as journalism. Being a journalist, it is very hard to get the accurate and

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reliable source and information and to publish that material in the media is not possible without passing the hurdles that are the issues in journalistic practices. Pakistani journalists are facing various serious problems during their journalistic practices and the journalism in Pakistan is really a difficult task (Relly & de Bustamante, 2014). Tactics to control the media and bans on it during the different regimes are the history of Pakistani rulers and the media. After invention of private media in Pakistan in 2002, the issues has been raised and increased to the journalistic practices and the journalists. Many of the journalists have gunned down in the recent years that are the worst face of the society. Being a state facing severe terrorism, many of the journalists have gunned down by the militants but at the same time threats and pressures from the government institutions are also the main aspect need to be addressed. Female journalists are facing more problems than the male in Pakistan (Bakr, 1994). Some actions are needed to be taken by the government to disregard the gender discrimination (Shabir, 2012). Unlimited working hours for majority of the journalists distress their family relationships and they are not able to give proper time to their families (Salwen & Garrison, 1998). The commitment with the profession may be affected by long professional hours.

Problems and Issues

Low salary packages remained always a hurdle for the working journalists. Most of the newspapers in rural areas even didn't pay the salary to the staff (Shabir, 2012). Most of the journalists have found unsatisfactory by their pay scales and that reflected negative impact on their performance and motivation to do some more for the institution (Anwar & Asghar, 2009). Presentation of the news on the media is very weak by the journalists due to lack of training and professional work experience (Anwar & Asghar, 2009). The media may be very effective if the proper trainings sessions are held. Proper trainings to the journalists may be helpful in decreasing the death toll of them during their profession work. Different kinds of threats like intimidation, kidnappings, harassment etc are also an issue need to be addressed. Governments are making hurdles to the journalists in their professional practices and even positive things by the media are not being recognized or appreciated. This resulted in low growth rate of the industry (Salwen & Garrison, 1998).

Dangers Faced by Working Journalists

The lives of journalists are in serious danger during their work. In fact, the journalists have not any security during their working practices. The

increasing dangers for the journalists in Pakistan might be because of extensive power of the rulers and the authorities. A same kind of situation is observed all over the globe. Identification of the problems is essential to resolve them.

Problem Statement

The problems faced by working journalists remained a researchable topic since decades. The focus of the research will be on the factors those making a professional environment of journalism in Pakistan in danger.

Significance of the Study

Being a part of fourth pillar of the society, the journalists are main source in developing of the society. The role of the media in the society is considered as “watch dog” representing the issues of the society. This research work will highlight the major problems faced by the working journalists. Moreover, it will be helpful to categorize the issues of journalists in Pakistan. The results will identify the role of different journalistic bodies to cover up the issues as well.

Literature Review

O’Neill and Tony (2009) defined journalism as the gathering of information and making it to a news sense to diffuse among the people. The author indicated that inquiry and investigation were the key factors in journalism. Security issues to the working journalists are more identifiable in the developing and under developing countries. Carragee and Roefs (2004) concluded that journalist’s sociological aspects were positively associated with their working environment. More sociological problems with the journalists in Pakistan affect badly their working capacity and motivation. Some of the authors investigated social behavior a key factor behind the development of the institutions (Ashley & Orenstein, 2005). It was explored that job satisfaction is necessary for improving the journalistic practices. There have been found many journalists working out of their countries making the satisfaction level among them more important. The authors further added that there occurred more dissatisfaction among the investigative journalists working out of their countries. Code of ethics has been fully demolished during the journalistic practices. The confidentiality of the source is compulsory for the journalists but if the courts or higher authorities ask, the source cannot be hiding and this practice reduces the freedom of the journalism (Robinson, 2011). Use of social media may be a

source to decrease the dissatisfaction level among the journalists regarding their journalistic practices. The authors favored their findings with the statement that different social media tools were helpful in engaging one to one communication and to decrease mental stress (Kay, Leslie, & Bernardo, 2003). Negativity of the social media to the working journalists regarding their journalistic practices has also been a point of research. The widened of social media has decreased the economic scales of the working journalists (Schudson, 1997). Online working environment was resulted in shrinking of the newsrooms and the traditional ways of journalism used for a long time had been diverted to newer revolutionized industry. Increase in use of online techniques and fast technology for information and communication to have effect over a large globe at the same time was resulted in lessened the journalistic practices (Griffin & Lee, 1995). In 19th century, the journalists working in the war zone were called “special correspondents”. Although, reporting from the war zone is very risky but very useful for the ratings of the channels (Carragee & Roefs, 2004). The unlimited working hours of the journalists have reduced their capabilities and the main sociological problem for them (Pennock & Lawrence, 2001). The immense increase in the news channels had developed a sense that the media in Pakistan is growing rapidly and improving its standards. But the scenario is, the issue of the low salaries in the media sector is increasing day by day and need to be addressed properly (Suntai & Vakkai, 2014) and its gradually affects the work performance of the journalists. Gender discrimination is one of the major issues during the journalistic practices. Problems for the female journalists have been reduced but still exist (Robinson, 2011). Geographical and cultural impact on the gender discrimination is the topic to be discussed. The issue of gender discrimination increases when both the genders don't acknowledge and appreciate the work of eachother (Chambers, Linda, & Carole, 2013). Greater political influence on the media and the working journalists is also a factor in less motivated news covering (Domingo, Quandt, Heinonen, Paulussen, Singer, & Vujnovic, 2008). Journalists work in the pressurized environment from all around (Van Dalen, Erik, & Claes, 2011, p. 147).

Research Model

The variables and framework have been developed with accordance to the combination of the literature. The different issues faced by the journalists have been examined in a way mentioned below:-

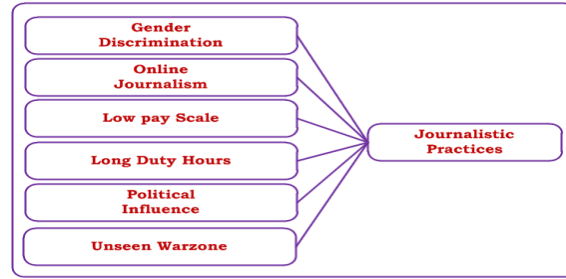


Figure 1: Research Model

Objectives of the Study

1. To dig out and identify the problems faced by the working journalists.
2. To find out the problems creating social issues for the working journalists.
3. To analyze the security problems faced by the working journalists.
4. To find out the satisfaction level of the journalists with their pay scales.
5. To dig out the sense of security among the journalists.
6. To explore the importance of 7th wage board among the journalists.
7. To examine the importance of trainings among the journalists.

Research Hypothesis

- H1:** Gender discrimination and journalistic practices are negatively associated.
- H2:** Journalistic practices and online journalism are negatively associated with each other.
- H3:** There is a negative relationship between low salaries and journalistic practice.
- H4:** Long duty hours affect the journalistic practices negatively.
- H5:** Political influence is negatively associated with journalistic practices.
- H6:** Unseen war-zone is contributing negatively in journalistic practices.

Research Methodology

Survey method was used to get the desired data and a Likert scale has been produced to get desired results. A questionnaire has been developed by indicating the different variables defined above and many questions according to the variable's indicators have been furnished and asked by the respondents. SPSS was used to analyze the gathered data.

Population and Sample of the Study

All the working journalists of print and electronic media in Rawalpindi and Islamabad including editors, sub editors, reports, anchors and correspondents were the population of the research. As the matter was concerned to the journalistic issues so the researchers selected the offices of the most popular newspapers and television channels situated in Rawalpindi and Pakistan i.e. PTV, Daily Jang, Daily Express, Daily Dawn, Daily Nawa-i-Waqt, Geo TV, Express TV and Dawn TV. The researchers selected all the registered media persons in the mentioned institutions as sample of the study. Some of them were not willing to become the part of this study. Overall, 279 respondents filled the questionnaire whereas, 19 were not filled properly. Therefore, the total of 260 responses was analyzed.

Operationalization of Variables

The variables were operationalized as under:-

Independent Variables

Gender discrimination

This variable was operationalized by asking general thinking about the gender discrimination. After that, the respondents were asked to rate the maturity towards the female journalists, their level of freedom and threatening level towards them.

Online Journalism

Integration of online journalism, its impact on the traditional journalistic practices and influence on the print media were the part of the online journalism.

Low Pay Scale

The satisfaction level of the journalists with their pay scales, comparison with other institutional salaries, compatibility with the working hours and daily expense were the indicators for the low pay scale.

Long Duty Hours

The satisfaction level of journalists with their duty hours, impact on the social life and demotivation towards their professional practices due to the long duty hours were the indicators for the variable.

Political Influence

Problematic political influence over media practices and effect of political instability on the professionalism were the indicators for the variable.

Unseen Warzone

Hurdles faced while reporting in war zones and satisfaction towards the salary packages were the indicators for the variable.

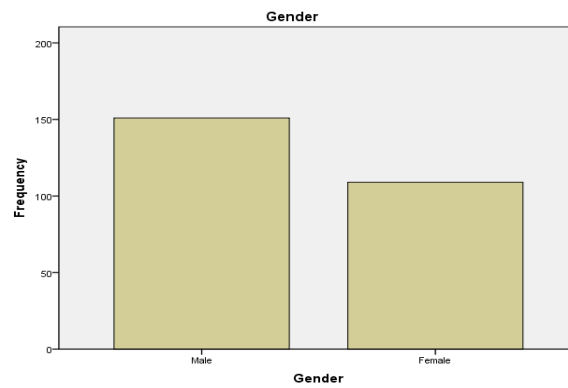
Dependent Variable

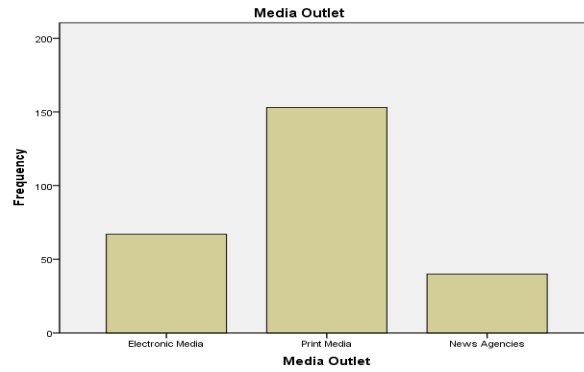
Journalistic practices

Easiness of the journalistic practices, independence from the political influence, importance of the journalism and satisfaction level while practicing journalism were the key indicators for the variable.

Results and Discussions

The results showed that 151 respondents were the male and 109 were female in which 67 from the electronic media, 153 from the print media and 40 were from the news agencies. 52.7% from the all respondents were from the government media and 47.3% were from the private media. Reliability of the questionnaire was assessed ($\alpha=.921$).





Regression Analysis

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.837 ^a	.701	.694	1.32655

The results concluded that 70% of the variation in journalistic practices is explained by the independent variables making them to be explored in terms of their effects.

ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1042.339	6	173.723	98.721	.000 ^a
	Residual	445.212	253	1.760		
	Total	1487.551	259			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Unseen warzone, Gender discrimination, Low Pay Scale, Long Duty Hours, Online Journalism, Political Influence

b. Dependent Variable: Journalistic practices

The results showed that there was a significant relationship between the journalistic practices and all the above mentioned independent variables as the calculated value of $F(6, 253) = 2.25 < 98.72$.

Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.336	.473		7.057	.000
	Gender discrimination	.005	.033	.006	.149	.882
	Online Journalism	-.052	.051	-.074	-1.005	.316

Low Pay Scale	-.064	.060	-.065	-1.072	.285
Long Duty Hours	.484	.072	.502	6.715	.000
Political Influence	.244	.082	.229	2.958	.003
Unseen warzone	.382	.056	.336	6.818	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Journalistic practices

The category wise prediction analyzed that all the dependent variables have the affects over dependent variables i.e. journalistic practices. The further analysis found the relationship of different independent variables with the dependent variable.

D/ID	r
Journalistic Practices	
Gender Discrimination	-0.045
Online Journalism	-0.355
Low Pay Scale	-0.313
Long Duty Hours	-0.464
Political Influence	-0.500
Unseen Warzone	-0.445

The researchers applied the spearman’s correlation as the data was nonparametric. The results showed that the gender discrimination, online journalism, low pay scale, long duty hours, political influence and unseen warzone as defined independent variables were negatively associated with the dependent variable i.e. journalistic practices with r values -0.045, -0.355, -0.313, -0.464, -0.500 and -0.445 respectively. The results of above mentioned table supported the hypotheses 1-6.

Results declared that 78.84% of the total respondents were not satisfied with their pay scales and salaries and remaining 21.16% got satisfactory. Furthermore, 84.61% of the total respondents were not in favor of the question that they felt secure. 8% of them remained neutral. 67.30% of the total respondents were not in favor of the statement that their families were secure and necessary arrangement had been made by the government in the capital in this regard, 21.15% respondents remained neutral in this regard and remaining were in favor of the statement. Implementation of wage award has remained a critical topic among the journalists but the results declared that 59.61 % of the respondents said “problems are being faced due to non implementation of wage award”, 23.13% of the respondents neglected the statement and remaining remained neutral. 65.38% of the total respondents were in favor of the proper trainings to the journalists, 26.92% were against and remaining was neutral.

Conclusion

The study concluded that the practicing journalism in Pakistan was extensively suffering from the political pressures and there was found very less freedom of speech. This outcome becomes more important when we address the issue of the massive killings or attacks on the practicing journalists in Pakistan. The major reason behind the dissatisfaction among the journalists was gathered as low salary packages. This outcome may be adopted to finalize and implement the process of Wage Board Award for the sake of the financial securities of the journalists. Low dissatisfaction among the journalists may work as hygienic for the motivation among the workers. The results also contributed that the long duty hours had badly affected the social structures of the journalists. It may be added that the less working hours with full devotion and capacity may lead to a healthy environment for the journalists. More gender discrimination towards the female professionals in the field of journalism has highlighted the grey future of the Pakistani journalism in future. It was further concluded that the journalists had faced massive political pressures while their professional practicing. The more freedom without any substantive pressures may lead to a healthy and productive journalistic environment. The higher dissatisfaction about the security level of the journalists lead to the conclusion that the state had not be able to fulfill its responsibility as a whole.

Recommendations

1. The government authorities along with the media representatives should initiate some serious steps to train the journalists for working in challenging environment. The legal and ethical issues should be the main part of the initiative.
2. Government should take some steps to secure the practicing journalists from the various threats including social and security.
3. It is further recommended that the journalists should be given justified salaries against their work. For the purpose, wage board award which was the mutual working of the journalistic bodies and the government authorities may be implemented. It will be also helpful to overcome the issue of job security of the working journalists.

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