



# More Women in Media

## The Way Forward

**MORE WOMEN**

**IN**

**MEDIA**

**THE WAY FORWARD**

*Facts and figures are the staple food of journalists and program-makers. In discussions about what is wrong with, or missing from, the pictures of the world we get from media content, hard data together with concrete examples will reach media professionals with an immediacy never achieved by theory or abstract argument. This is what media monitoring and advocacy is about.*

*Margaret Gallagher,  
Author of Who Makes the News?  
Report of the Global Media Monitoring Project, 2005*

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## Acronyms

ACR	Annual Confidential Report
APP	Associated Press of Pakistan
BPFA	The Beijing Platform for Action
CBO	Community Based Organization
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
GDI	Gender-related Development Index
GEM	Gender Empowerment Measurement
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
ILO	International Labor Organization
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NCSW	National Commission on the Status of Women
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NPA	National Plan of Action
PBC	Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation
PTV	Pakistan Television
PWMN	Pakistani Women's Media Network
RJ	Radio Jockey
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
TOR	Terms of Reference
TV	Television
UN	The United Nations



## Foreword



This report is a documentation of a process aimed at better portrayal and representation of women in the media through active involvement of media professionals as well as the media decision-makers – most of whom are men. It unfolds for the readers, chapter by chapter, a dialogue that is expected to not just emphasize better and more supportive coverage on women's issues, or provide media with the skills and willingness to look at news contents from a gendered lens, but also advocate women's inclusion and participation – at every level – in the media industry.

The report through the media monitoring and content analysis presents a comprehensive picture of issues that are faced by women in the media, revealing that there are many challenges in bringing more women in mainstream media, but none that cannot be tackled. Working journalists, editors and owners need to fully understand the issues and concepts behind the title of this report – “More Women in Media: The Way Forward.” The research indicates that it is not that women are not reported, the issue is whether or not they are reported competently, positively and in the mainstream media – rather than being ghettoized in women's pages, or women's hours, etc.

The report also looks at the need to resolve the ever-prevalent gender discrimination while assigning news beats. The gender biased division of 'hard' and 'soft' news continues to discriminate against women who are equally competent to take up hard issues, but are kept away from such news beats on the pretext of their gender. Few women journalists have succeeded in breaking this myth and successfully reported/analyzed hard-core news, be it war, political crisis, conflict or peace issues.

There is a great need for manuals or guides that journalists can benefit from to dispel the sometime in-built gender biases and learn how to integrate gender-balance in their daily news gathering and reporting. The gender-sensitive code of ethics by Uks can be one document that could be used to keep a check on gender-insensitive language, portrayal and representation of women in the media.

It is hoped that this report will help create the much needed awareness, the why's and how's of having more women in the mainstream media. It is also hoped that the media – journalists and managers – would try to follow some (if not all) of the recommendations. This would not only improve the news coverage, views and opinions, but may also prove to be a guiding light for many others to follow.

*Tasneem Ahmar*

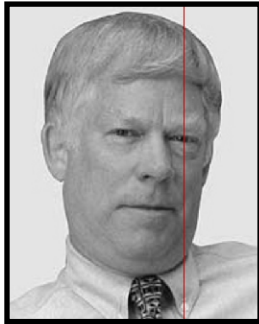
Tasneem Ahmar

Director

Uks Research Center on Women and Media

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## Preface



Study after study has found that breaking down gender barriers and empowering women are essential for sound economic development. Unfortunately, in Pakistan the status of women is woefully low. Only 36 percent of Pakistani women are literate, and only one-fifth of Pakistani women of working age are members of the workforce. Pakistan ranks 132nd out of 134 countries on the World Economic Forum's most recent Global Gender Gap Index. This pitiful ranking is not simply a national embarrassment; it represents a huge barrier to Pakistan's development.

Improving the status of women in Pakistan is an admittedly ambitious goal. However, Pakistan's vibrant media can be an important ally in this effort, given the substantial opinion-making role the media, especially Pakistan's lively television programming, plays in Pakistani society. Less than 5 percent of Pakistan's journalists are women, yet some of the country's most prominent media anchors and analysts are female. Such women can serve as role models and become catalysts for change in Pakistan.

This guide represents an effort to improve depictions of women and gendered issues in the Pakistani media, and to boost the status of female journalists in Pakistan. It also has a larger purpose: to encourage and promote the empowerment of Pakistani women in all walks of life, an urgent national need if Pakistan is to achieve its vast potential. The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, one of Washington's leading institutes for advanced research, is a strong supporter of debate and scholarship that focuses on practical measures to address Pakistan's social and economic challenges. The Wilson Center is delighted to have partnered with ML Resources and with Tasneem Ahmar and her marvelous Uks staff on this project, and expresses its warm appreciation to its partners for making this project possible.

*Robert M. Hathaway*

Robert M. Hathaway  
Director, Asia Program  
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Washington, DC

## Executive summary

During the last decade, media has become stronger and more influential in Pakistan due to the rapid development of communication technologies and infrastructure development. Many privately owned commercial radio stations and TV channels have been launched. Today media is providing the masses with a lot of information, which is both positive and negative. The media's power to influence masses has also increased through which it is able to shape the ideas, values, behavior and concepts of the general public. Unfortunately, most newspapers, magazines, TV channels, and radio stations do not follow a commonly accepted code of ethics.

Media today creates advertisements, entertainment, and news, which need to be soaked in and understood by the general public as quickly as possible. Under the circumstances, media stereotypes are inevitable. Stereotypes are often problematic as they can neglect the differences in people, creating simplistic generalizations; transform assumptions into realities for the viewers; they often justify the actions and decisions of people in power; and they are known to perpetuate social inequalities and prejudices.

Female stereotypes in entertainment and news media, including on screen portrayals of women have an effect on cultural ideas of beauty and the role of women in society. These stereotypes also influence the social development of women.

There is an increased amount of coverage of women and women's issues now, however, media still tends to portray women as objects and/or victims. Women are pressured to have perfect bodies, flawless faces, silky hair, along with sparkling teeth and perfect personalities. This highly desirable image is extremely unattainable for most women. The media, without question, shapes this image of women in the minds of the general public. The media also shapes expectations in the minds of men, regarding women. In the current scenario, this does not earn women a lot of respect at the workplace or in society in general. Women are faced with unrealistic expectations, created by the media, which clearly have many negative effects on women and the society.

Ignoring women in the media, their insufficient presentation, and embodying them in specific roles continues to be a global issue. To address this issue in media, positively and frequently, the need of the hour is to train and gender-sensitize journalists to cover important issues about women. This report has attempted to analyze how the Pakistani media has been representing women of our society.

Analyzing media representation of women means analyzing the way society represents women. There is intentional and unintentional reinforcement of social stereotypes about women in Pakistan. In many cases, women themselves are unaware of their biased attitudes. Women's access to and growth in media institutions has seldom been supported. The openings for women within the media industry, in employment and decision-making, are limited. Not enough women in media organizations have attained senior positions due to a lack of fair professional opportunities.

## Key findings

The key findings of the report include:

- **Women are excluded from top positions in Pakistani media houses.** The fact that the top management in most media houses is male and does not recognize the rights of women, contributes greatly to the fact that women are excluded from top jobs in media.
- **Women are greatly out-numbered by men in the media workforce.** Despite the fact that it is difficult to find adequate data on male and female ratios working in Pakistan media, we can safely say that there are fewer women in this field compared to men.
- **Gender division of news beats is biased, favoring male reporters.** Women reporters, who are equally competent to take up 'hard' issues like politics, economy, and sports, are kept away on the pretext of their gender.
- **Sexual harassment is a very serious concern.** This is a topic not well understood in media houses in Pakistan, mainly due to a lack of awareness and sensitivity towards gender issues.
- **The portrayal of women in media is biased and prejudiced.** When women do get reported on, they are often portrayed as sex objects, beauty objects, as docile homemakers, and as victims. Some categories of women, the working class and minorities receive even less attention.
- **Absence of training and capacity building for women.** There is a need to provide women with equal opportunities for intensive training, empowering them with professional skills to fight for their place in mainstream media.
- **Traditions and culture hinder women's learning process.** In media a lot of training takes place on the job. Women feel their male colleagues are able to learn at a faster pace because they can sit with senior male colleagues and learn things over a cup of tea, etc. - there are no cultural barriers getting in their way.
- **Unfriendly environments and a lack of facilities for women discourage them from working in media.** Unfavorable conditions at the workplace like improper seating arrangements, lack of ladies' toilets, lack of transportation, etc. expose women to discomfort at the workplace and discourage them from working at media houses.
- **Long and unpredictable hours carry a social stigma for women.** This makes it very difficult for women to cover 'hard' news beats, which require them to work at all odd hours and include a lot of traveling at times.
- **Gender-sensitive reporting is missing in print and electronic media.** Women are not given the opportunity to be involved at all levels of media houses, especially in decision-making positions. The nature of information being disseminated should be sensitive towards both men and women, and women should be used as sources of stories, alongside men.

- **Media bias of women in sports.** Sports is a male-dominated domain, but media in Pakistan can play a key role in overcoming the barriers regarding women's participation in sports. The media, however, seem to have a negative effect on the efforts of women in sports.
- **Media advertisements portray women in stereotypical roles.** Creative and destructive roles of advertisements include discrimination against women, which play a huge role in shaping the gender roles in society.
- **Gender specific coverage of news in print and electronic media favors men.** Women are under-represented and a proportion of news about them, though small, is biased and unfair.

## Structure of the report

The report comprises of ten chapters as

- Chapter one, *Introduction and context*, provides background information of women in media.
- Chapter two, *Media monitoring – concept and methodology*, covers the objectives and purpose of the research undertaken for the report.
- Chapter three, *Missing in news and views: Women's representation in Pakistan media*, takes a closer look at the under-representation of women in media and the reasons behind it.
- Chapter four, *Gender-sensitive reporting? Portrayal of women in media*, gives a picture of how women are viewed and perceived by the society in Pakistan.
- Chapter five, *Equality? Working conditions and environment*, provides details of the working conditions of media houses in Pakistan.
- Chapter six, *What do women bring to the media?* analyzes the coverage of women's issues and news in print and electronic media in Pakistan.
- Chapter seven, *Bringing about a change for the better*, suggests strategies and measures to achieve gender equality in media.
- Chapter eight, *Gender-sensitization training and gender audit*, briefly introduces the concepts of gender-sensitization trainings and gender audits in media.
- Chapter nine, *Media and the rights of women in Pakistan*, lists a brief outline of various commitments adopted by Pakistan and their implementation.
- Chapter ten gives conclusions and recommendations.

The dialogue boxes given within paragraphs in some of the chapters state the quotes by women, and in a few cases by men, who were interviewed at their radio stations and TV channels. The names of the persons interviewed and their respective organizations have been kept confidential.

The boxes given at the end of most of the chapters titled, "Checklist for management," are questions intended to aid and facilitate managers in evaluating their own practices within their organizations.

# Chapter 1

## Introduction and context

There are significant ways in which societies organize themselves, in their shared moral values, and in the ways they interact with their environment. Every culture teaches its young how to behave and every family shares its knowledge with its young, passing on traditions and behavioral patterns. All of us, men and women, girls and boys, young and old are lifelong learners. This continuous learning forms personal and social identities, expressed through language and culture.

Media is the fastest and most popular access to information for the masses in the world today. While we are watching TV or listening to the radio or reading a newspaper or magazine, media is shaping our opinions and attitudes. Media determines the public discourse and thereby shapes our political, cultural, and economic priorities. Media also determines and shapes the roles of men and women in society.

The rapid development of communication and infrastructure development in Pakistan during the last decade has provided the masses with access to a lot more information. In turn, media has an increased influence over the masses through which it is able to shape the ideas, values, behavior, and concepts of the general public. Many privately owned commercial radio stations and TV channels have been launched, and as expected, the information being delivered to the masses is both positive and negative.

Ignoring women in the media, their under-representation, and embodying them in specific roles continues to be a global issue. To address this issue in media, it is important to first understand the issues faced by women in media globally and in Pakistan.

## Global context

The coverage of women and women's issues has increased and improved, however, media still tends to portray women as objects and/or victims. It cannot be denied that media shapes our conceptions about many things. Unfortunately, certain stereotypes are reflected on women by media everywhere. For example, advertisers use women to sell products, which in turn helps the majority of the population to view women as something to be bought, sold and used.

Women are under-represented in top positions and are well represented at the lower levels in media houses. Management tends to ignore women journalists when it comes to hard news beats, such as politics and the economy. These are the assignments, which help journalists get promotions to managerial positions.

Women's status in media and the issue of gender equality have progressed over the years, due to decades of research, advocacy and political lobbying at the international level.

The Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA), adopted unanimously by 189 Member States of the United Nations at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, cited media as one of the twelve 'critical areas of concern.' The BPFA is considered to be the most comprehensive

agenda for women's empowerment. The BPFA's section J is dedicated to Women and the Media. The two strategic objectives for this section are: (i) To increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and technologies of communication. (ii) Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media.

From March 1 to 12, 2010, government delegations attending the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will assess progress made in the implementation of BPFA, 15 years since it was adopted at the UN Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China, in 1995.

## **The Pakistan context**

Analyzing media representation of women means analyzing the way society represents women. There is intentional as well as unintentional reinforcement of social stereotypes about women in our society. In many cases, women themselves are unaware of their own biased attitudes. Women's access to and growth in media organizations has not been supported in Pakistan. The openings for women within the media industry, especially in decision-making positions are limited. In fact women are missing from top management positions in media houses in Pakistan. Due to the environment of media houses in Pakistan, a lot of times women tend to feel frustrated and move away from the media industry to find other jobs.

Against this backdrop, Uks and the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars decided to join hands in early 2009 to take forward Uks' mission of "Empowering women through media." The collaboration resulted in this research manual for media persons, "More Women in News and Views: The Way Forward."

Two research-based events were organized to look at how media has not been giving proper coverage to women related news, specifically on issues of energy, water, hygiene, sanitation, and economic development.

The first event, a roundtable in Islamabad was held on March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2009, with limited participation from national and regional media (print and electronic). The participants were selected from media outlets in Islamabad and included top management (editors, bureau chiefs, director generals, etc.). It also included news desk staff. This was a brainstorming session with participants discussing and debating how women are portrayed in media, identifying the gaps and the way forward. During the roundtable, commitments were sought from some, not all, media managers to allocate at least 10 percent of their space to development issues.

The second event was a National Conference held in Karachi on October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2009. This conference focused on commitments made during the first roundtable and the subsequent group discussions in the second phase. The draft report from the first roundtable, based on



content analysis, as well as situational analysis of women journalists in media was reviewed and critiqued. A result of all these efforts is this manual, consisting of the deliberations and recommendations in book form, intended to be used by media persons to become more informed about gender issues in media, and to assist them in promoting gender equality through positive attitudes in media.

### **Gender policies in media houses**

The assessment of the content and portrayal of women by media has remained a neglected area of research and it is a matter meriting redress by the regulatory bodies in Pakistan. Women's portrayal is usually made to follow commercial interests in our society. While it would be unfair to state that profit is not important, it is equally important for media houses in Pakistan to follow a common gender policy taking into consideration the fair portrayal of women and men in the media. On the contrary, the current policy being followed by media is one of co-modification, commercialization, and consumerism. There is a lack of gender policies in media houses.

It is hoped that this research will help media houses put in place policies and measures that will transform the overall work environment. Some of the issues media houses should include in gender policies for media are gender sensitive environment, recruitment, promotions, facilities, and training.





## Chapter 2

### Media monitoring - Concept & methodology

The concept behind this research project was to create awareness among the media managers and working journalists of Pakistani print and electronic media about the coverage of women related news and issues of women in media. The project also aimed to increase the willingness of media managers to bring positive changes for women in media and to get commitment from them on maximizing their efforts to bring more women into mainstream media.

Through the activities of media monitoring, group discussions with media managers and women working in the media, holding a national conference and putting together this media guide, the project has aimed to achieve the following:

- Minimizing negative and stereotypical portrayals of women in media
- Bringing forward success stories of women in media
- Advocating the delegation of hard beats (politics, economy, crime, etc.) to women journalists
- Urging the induction of more women on news desks
- Bridging the gap between NGOs and media to promote improved coordination
- Supporting positive coverage of women's groups and their activities
- Building linkages with mass communication departments in various Pakistani universities to include women's issues and concerns in their curriculum
- Creating awareness on the need for mandatory gender sensitization training courses for all media personnel, journalists, scriptwriters, producers, directors, actors, planners, and programmers on radio and television
- Providing media managers with a handy and useful guide
- Encouraging more women office bearers in media associations and active participation in journalists' unions and press clubs

### Methodology

The focus of this research project was to monitor different media tools in order to study coverage of women related news, employment patterns and the environment of media houses.

A team of three media monitors was selected and each monitor was assigned one media tool, i.e. print, radio and television. They were asked to monitor and analyze content involving women, through pre-defined Content Analysis Forms.

### Purpose of the research

The research was carried out to examine the following issues:

- The impact and extent of coverage accorded to women's issues and women in media
- Reporting patterns on women's issues (favorable/unfavorable patterns) and the nature of news items on women

- Gender bias in the field of media (affirmative actions)
- The provocative and stereotypical image of women in advertisements and public perception
- Analysis of the current situation of news production media and emerging trends
- Analysis of reporting in terms of gender sensitivity, code of ethics, and use of language

### Scope of the analysis

The media monitoring initiative covered local and national daily and weekly newspapers and magazines, radio stations, TV news channels, from both state owned and private media.

This media monitoring activity was carried out for two months from May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009 to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009. The list of media tools used to collect information for the content analysis included print, radio and TV as follows:

### Print

The fourteen publications monitored for this research can be seen in the table below:

	English	Urdu
<b>Daily</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dawn</li> <li>• Daily Times</li> <li>• The News</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jang</li> <li>• Daily Express</li> <li>• Khabrain</li> </ul>
<b>Weekly</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Friday Times</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Akbar-e-Jehan</li> </ul>
<b>Monthly</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newline</li> <li>• Herald</li> </ul>	

### Radio

The following five radio stations, broadcasting programs in the Urdu language, were monitored:

	Radio Station	Location	Ownership	Language
1	Power 99 (Tuned at FM 99)	Islamabad	Private	Urdu
2	BBC (From website)	--	Private	Urdu
3	Mast FM 103 (From website)	Lahore	Private	Urdu
4	Radio Pakistan (Tuned at FM 103)	Islamabad	State owned	Urdu
5	Radio Pakistan (Tuned at FM 101)	Islamabad	State owned	Urdu

All news bulletins and broadcasts involving women or women's issues were monitored on the above-mentioned radio stations.

## Television

Seven TV news channels were monitored, as seen below:

	TV News Channel	Language
1	Dawn News	English
2	Express 24/7	English
3	Geo News	Urdu
4	Express News	Urdu
5	ARY News	Urdu
6	Aaj News	Urdu
7	KTN	Sindhi

The entire news bulletin on each TV channel was monitored for women related news.

The variety of publications (newspapers and magazines) and electronic media made it possible to analyze the coverage from a comprehensive perspective. Great care was taken to ensure the margin of error to be negligible.

In order for a news item to be qualified for analysis, it had to mention women.

## Instruments/Research Tools

The research used the following tools to monitor and analyze the content:

1. Media monitoring guidelines
2. Media content analysis forms

## **1. Media Monitoring Guidelines**

The research relied on standard media monitoring guidelines as a reference by the media monitors for their respective media tools. The guidelines used for each media tool are as follows:

- Print Media Monitoring Guidelines
- Radio Monitoring Guidelines
- Television Monitoring Guidelines

### **(a) Print Media Monitoring Guidelines**

Make sure that all the pages of each newspaper are mentioned for national and international women related news, columns, features, opinions, advertisements, editorials, letters to the editor, and photographs.

- Monitor all news items mentioning women.
- Make sure that the length of a column is accurately measured in column inches.
- The length measuring procedure is the same for advertisements and photographs.
- Kindly ensure that you know what column, news, features, editorials, etc. mean.
- Kindly ensure that you are well aware of the difference between favorability of news. Define the criteria.
- Kindly ensure that the information sheet is fully understood so that it is filled out properly.

### **(b) Radio Monitoring Guidelines**

Make sure that the morning and evening news bulletins are monitored for each station separately. This includes all national and international news related to women. This includes reports, features, and news.

- Ensure that particular news is categorized properly as sports news, features, breaking news, reports, documentaries, etc.
- Kindly ensure that you are well aware of the difference between favorability of news. Define the criteria
- Make sure that you monitor time for women news in minutes/seconds
- Kindly ensure that the information sheet is fully understood so that it is filled out properly.

### **(c) Television Monitoring Guidelines**

Make sure that the morning and evening news bulletins are monitored for each channel separately. This includes all national and international news related to women. This includes reports, features, and news.

- Ensure that news is categorized properly as sports news, features, breaking news, reports, documentaries, etc.
- Kindly ensure that you are well aware of the difference between favorability of news. Define the criteria.
- Make sure that you monitor time for news about women in minutes/seconds, out of a 60 or 30 minutes news bulletin
- Kindly ensure that the information sheet is fully understood so that it is filled out properly.

## **2. Media Content Analysis Forms**

The media monitors completed the following content analysis forms for each news item in the news bulletin or the newspaper section. This included reports, articles, etc.

The media monitors used the following three forms to analyze the content of the media tools:

- a. Print media content analysis form
- b. Electronic media analysis form Radio
- c. Electronic media analysis form Television

The content analysis forms were updated and standardized as per requirement of the analysis. All media monitors for both print and electronic media used the new forms. It was ensured that the monitoring sheets of the print and electronic media were updated in accordance with the updated content analysis forms.

## Chapter 3

### Missing in news and views: Women's representation in Pakistani Media

#### Why are there fewer women in Pakistani media?

Despite the fact that it is difficult to find adequate data on male and female ratios working in media in Pakistan, we can safely say that there are fewer women working in this field as compared to men.

A lot of girls in Pakistan are students of journalism and mass communication, but they hesitate to join the field of media. The list of reasons responsible for this situation is long, however, in this chapter we will discuss only a few very important factors, as uncovered in this research.

The fact that women are missing from top positions in Pakistan media has a very negative impact and keeps women out of media houses. The world of media is male-dominated and is literally being run by men in Pakistan, which has created an environment discouraging women from joining and staying in media houses.

A vicious cycle has been created where a change in the portrayal of women in media is required to change opinions about women, while women need better training and skills to compete with men in mainstream media. It is necessary for women to join media houses and then to fight for top positions so that they may bring a woman's perspective into decision-making and policy planning. This is, of course, easier said than done as women have a lot of constraints to deal with just because they are women. To mention a few, culture and traditions in Pakistan do not encourage women to join a field such as media – families are not always understanding about letting their girls take up careers in media. The working conditions at media houses are not always conducive for female workers and women are already juggling responsibilities at home and work, making the stress and pressure higher than what is faced by men working in the same offices. It is easier for men to mingle with other men and get trained on-the-job, whereas women find it difficult to do that due to cultural constraints.

#### Women missing from top positions

While a lot of women have been discouraged from joining media in Pakistan, there are a few women who are fighting to be acknowledged for their abilities. Then why are women missing from top positions in the field of media?

The fact that the top management in most media houses is male and does not recognize the rights of women, contributes greatly to the fact that women are excluded from top jobs.

In order to see more women in top positions in the media, there have to be more men and women who are gender-sensitive. Having men who believe in gender issues is one of the key strategies in ensuring more women are recruited and promoted. Women need to be taken seriously by top management and their male colleagues. They need to be given

respect as professionals who can handle hard news beats, such as political and economic issues, etc. These are the news beats that help journalists prove their worth and get promoted to senior positions.

More women need to be in decision-making positions within the media in order to influence decisions about hiring more female staff and policy decisions regarding sexual harassment at workplaces, among other things.

Very few women journalists have made it to the top. In the history of Pakistan, no woman has ever been editor of an Urdu newspaper. Dr. Maliha Lodhi (*The Muslim and The News International*) was the only woman to head English language dailies. She is joined by Dr. Shirin Mazari who now heads *The Nation* as its editor. Kamala Hyat, Beena Sarwar, Ayesha Haroon have headed different editions of national dailies. Two political monthlies-the *Herald* and *Newsline*- have women editors and predominantly female teams.

The press in Urdu and regional languages, which captures 80 percent of the newspaper market, has very few women workers. The state-controlled Pakistan Television Corporation has had one female reaching a top position as a Managing Director and another female as Director of Programs. However, the official wire agency APP has never had a woman Director General nor has the state-owned Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation ever had a female heading the organisation.

Today there are many new, privately owned, television channels and radio stations that have employed female staff as reporters and radio jockies (RJs), but that is where it ends for most female staff. They do not reach senior positions except in very few cases, especially in private media organizations.

### **Dialogue box 1**

An employee at one of the radio stations said, "I would like to say that our radio station has broken the taboo, that women cannot head any department, 6 years ago. A lady has been heading the technical department of our radio station for the last 6 years, which is considered to be the most important department of a radio station."

### **Culture and traditions**

The media is often thought of as an inappropriate career path for women in societies like Pakistan. There is a certain mindset in our society regarding women who work in media organizations. Many families have the perception that women are not respected in media, and as a result, they do not allow their female family members to join the profession. These perceptions need to be changed and this can only happen if more women come into the profession and work hard to reach top-level jobs, so that they are in a position to improve women's profile in media organizations. Women in positions of power can bring about change through their authority to influence policies and the environment of media houses, making them favorable for women as well as men.

Tradition and culture reinforce gender stereotypes in newsrooms. There are cultural

restrictions and norms to be followed by women regarding where they may or may not go and how they may communicate with men at the workplace. Under the circumstances, women find it difficult to talk to men freely, which is an obstacle when it comes to learning things on the job. Most of the time women journalists in Pakistan are not assigned any important news beats involving politics, the economy or even sports. This is because women are not thought to be capable of handling such topics. This is a misconception, which has been engrained in the minds of our society, and especially in the minds of men, through cultural norms and the media. Media plays a very important role in shaping our concepts about male and female roles. This needs to be improved, starting from the grassroots level in media organizations.

Traditional and cultural beliefs consider men to be naturally more powerful than women and, therefore power and aggressiveness are seen as unnatural in a woman, and a challenge to the male ego. A lot of men find it very difficult to work in a subordinate position to a woman.

### **Is training an issue for Pakistani women in media?**

There is a definite need for professional training at various levels in media organizations in order for women to perform better in their jobs. Through this research it was found that a lot of women would feel much more confident if there were someone to mentor them and show them the ropes, at least in the beginning.

In media a lot of the training takes place on the job. Pakistani women in media feel that their male colleagues are able to learn at a faster pace because there are no cultural barriers getting in their way, while females are made to feel inferior and are kept away from certain work assignments due to their sex.

#### **Dialogue box 2**

A male employee of a TV channel said, “Women are so objectified that they only suit you in the form of floozy anchors. The scripts are written by some males or others and at the end of the day, you have a good-looking woman coming across on screen. You can't stop it until you have women journalists who think in a certain way. How many women have the beat of politics?”

A female at a TV channel, speaking about how her male colleagues have the advantage of being men, said, “He will sit late at night with the reporters in the club and will be able to go to the police station. He will attach himself to the senior reporters and they will drink, have a cup of tea, cigarette and pan together. I could not sit in those informal settings and have a cup of tea, cigarette and pan with those guys. I could never have an important news beat because I have not been out in the field, in the time when I should have been out there for reporting, so that people might say, 'Yes! She knows her stuff.' This is the saddest thing for my career.”



There is a need to provide women with equal opportunities for intensive and professional training, empowering them with skills to fight for their place in mainstream media.

### **Long and unpredictable hours**

Media work requires that one is available any time of the day for work. Most women find it difficult to balance their home life and their work, as they have responsibilities at home. In such cases, it is absolutely necessary for women to have understanding families and husbands, if they are married. A lot of women in this field feel they are unable to give their children the time they deserve.

The late working hours in this field carry a social stigma for women, and this makes it very difficult for them to cover hard news beats which require them to work at all odd hours and includes a lot of traveling at times.

#### **Dialogue box 3**

One woman from a radio station remarked, “One of the barriers for me was the time restrictions at my hostel. In those days my organization had given a written notice for late sittings, but the principal of the hostel did not allow me to reach any later than 8:00 pm, after which they locked the hostel gate. I asked the management for transport, but my voice was not heard. The same hardships persist even today, there has been no change.”

Another woman from a TV channel mentioned, “I have heard from my neighbors that you reach home at midnight and have a bad character, although they can see me in the company's vehicle with its name written on it. But they have the habit of gossiping against me. I feel, for them there is no difference between a woman working in media and a prostitute.”

### **Unfriendly environments and a lack of facilities**

A lot of media organizations in Pakistan have unfavorable and unfriendly environments, exposing women to discomfort. During our research we found women employees to complain about sexual and emotional harassment by managers and male colleagues. Women felt that men did not treat them with respect, especially when the male anchors refused to recognize the worth of their female colleagues and undermined their abilities by mocking them.

#### **Dialogue box 4**

A female employee from a TV channel said, "I would like to mention here that our senior male colleagues always humiliate us. They don't criticize us in order to correct us, but only to discourage us."

Most women in all offices visited by our research team complained of a lack of facilities for women, due to which a lot of women felt discouraged to work at the organization and some even left because they found it difficult to cope. Some women mentioned discomfort at the workplace due to improper seating arrangements.

#### **Dialogue box 5**

A female employee at a radio station said, "The major problem I'm faced with is that of improper seating arrangements. It is very difficult for us to move freely due to congested workspace. When we move out of our seats, our knees touch with those of men."

There was a lack of facilities for women to continue working after giving birth. There was no support for childcare or flexible timings available to these ladies. A lot of married women felt the need to adjust their timings according to their family needs at home.

#### **Dialogue box 6**

A female employee at a radio station said, "My child is four years old and I have left her in a day care center. Therefore, I suggest there should be a day care center here.

Another employee of a TV station said, "There should be day care center for women and some meetings should be held between the employer and employee for better suggestions."

In most media houses there is a lack of transportation, which makes it very difficult for women to stay at work till late at night. Some of the ladies suggested that they be given a separate van for women only, as when they are dropped off at their homes late at night with men in their vans, it gives neighbors and relatives a chance to point fingers at them.

### **Dialogue box 7**

A woman from a TV channel said, “Women working in media should be facilitated in a way that people should not raise fingers at them. Like, there should be a separate van for women only, because when people see men and women together in a van at midnight they assume that something indecent is going on. Hence, a little facilitation should be provided to women according to our cultural norms.”

Some media houses did not have separate toilets for women. And where they did have separate toilets, they were unable to keep their male colleagues out of ladies’ toilets. When stopped from using ladies’ toilets, male colleagues just laughed and did not take the issue seriously.

### **Dialogue box 8**

A female from a TV channel said, “Once I was in the washroom and someone was knocking on the door repeatedly. When I opened the door, I saw a man standing and laughing. When I said it was a ladies' washroom, he asked, 'Are you going to beat me now?'”

While it was good to see that disabled persons were hired by media organizations, facilities for the disabled were not in place. There were no ramps or washrooms that could easily be used by the disabled persons working at some of the media organizations.

### **Dialogue box 9**

A female from a radio station said, “There are environmental barriers in the building; there are no ramps for the disabled. The washrooms are locked and inaccessible to all the employees, while only a few select persons have keys to unlock them. There are no washrooms for wheelchair users.”

### **Checklist for management!**

- How many women work at your organization?
- How many women are working in senior positions?
- Do women receive professional training, especially when they join?
- Are there flexible timings for employees?
- Is transportation available to female employees?
- Are there separate washrooms for women?

# Chapter 4

## Gender-sensitive reporting? Portrayal of women in media

Media plays a significant role in determining how women and men are viewed and perceived by society in general. The media not only plays an important role in shaping the values of society, but also reflects those values.

Prejudices and biases related to gender emerge in media through the choices made by media managers, advertisers, and other media professionals every day. Women are often portrayed as sex objects, beauty objects, as docile homemakers, as victims of violence, poverty, natural disasters, war, etc. Some categories of women like elderly women, the working class and minorities receive even less attention.

### What is gender-sensitive reporting?

Gender-sensitive reporting may be defined as coverage that recognizes both men and women in a society, and takes into account the differences between the interests and priorities of men and women when reporting.

There should be involvement of women at all levels in media houses, including decision-making positions. The nature of the information being disseminated should be sensitive towards both men and women, and women should be used as sources of stories alongside men.

The following three things have been pointed out under gender-sensitive reporting by Uks:

#### ● Pictorial Depiction

The Code of Ethics presented by Uks, specifically for print media in 2003, recommended that whenever possible, pictures of glamorous women be replaced with pictures of women who had achieved success in various fields. There is a pressing need to remove inappropriate pictures of foreign women in skimpy sportswear and beauty contests, etc. and replace them with positive news and pictures of sportswomen in Pakistan. Also, uncaptioned pictures of women, attending social events and gatherings, appearing in newspapers should not be published without permission of the persons photographed.

This research analyzed approximately 30 photographs, with or without news items, of women in skimpy sportswear.

### ● **Right to Privacy**

According to the Code of Ethics presented by Uks, caution against identification should be employed in cases involving rape, abduction, acid throwing accidents, sexual assault on children or news regarding HIV/ AIDS. Names and photographs of the victims, or other particulars indicating their identity should not be published. Due restraint should be observed while reporting official visits to victims of rape and sexual assault. The secrecy of the source of confidential information should be maintained.

### ● **Maintaining Professional Standards**

According to the Code of Ethics set by Uks, judgmental words and phrases should not be used in news reports. Only facts should be given. Newspapers have every right to report on controversial issues but maximum caution should be exercised to ensure that: the event is not distorted to tilt public opinion; the use of judgmental words and opinions is avoided; if a certain aspect of the story needs highlighting, reporters should reflect the opinions of the public rather than projecting their own. The opposing point of view should also be reflected. There should be a comprehensive criteria determining 'news worthiness' which needs to be debated within the organizational structure of a newspaper. The marital status of a woman and the number of children need not be mentioned in rape or elopement cases. Gender insensitive vocabulary should be replaced with alternative gender sensitive vocabulary. Follow up of a crime story also needs to be highlighted i.e., whether or not the perpetrators of a certain crime were convicted.

## **Stereotyping women in media**

Media today needs to create advertisements, entertainment, and news, which need to be soaked in and understood by the general public as quickly as possible. Under the circumstances, media stereotypes are inevitable. Stereotypes may be seen as codes, which give the masses an instant understanding of the object being presented. However, stereotypes are often harmful because they can neglect the differences in people, creating simplistic generalizations; they usually transform assumptions into realities for the viewers; they often justify the actions and decisions of people in power; and they are known to perpetuate social inequalities and prejudices.

Female stereotypes in entertainment and news media, including on screen portrayals of women have an effect on cultural ideas of beauty and the role of women in society. These stereotypes also influence the social development of young women.

Women today are pressured to have perfect bodies, flawless faces, silky hair, along with sparkling teeth and perfect personalities. This highly desirable image is extremely unattainable for most women. The media, without question, shapes this image of women in the minds of the general public.

The majority of women does not meet these lofty goals and either consciously or unconsciously, regard themselves as “bad” or “ugly.” Expectations of men regarding women are also shaped by the media, which does not earn women a lot of respect in the workplace or in society in general. Women are seen as objects and/or victims.

### **Use and impact of derogatory language in media**

The impact of media today on the listeners, viewers and readers shows that there are many areas that need to be highlighted and worked on. One area is the kind of language used in reporting incidents and events involving women.

The use of derogatory language, misleading connotations, slang, etc. is quite common in media today. In a lot of cases sexist and sensational language is used when reporting news related to women. In print media, the author passes its responsibility and adverse effects onto the reader, with the excuse that it is what the reader wants and this is what raises the sales graph.

There is a very damaging impact of derogatory language on women’s status, their development and their dignity. This type of reporting is unethical and journalists should be encouraged to aim for good, clean and healthy reporting.

In 1998, Uks Research Center on Women & Media undertook a research study called “Impact of Newspaper Language and Reporting on Women’s Status and Development.” It was observed in the research that the abusive terminology used in print media reflected specifically on women. Interestingly, there were no examples of specifically defined derogatory language when reporting on neutral issues or issues relating to men only.

After a decade it is seen that this trend of reporting has changed to a great extent, however, there is a lot of room for improvement. The consequence of reporting against the code of ethics has instilled and reinforced biased, prejudiced, and an unhealthy attitude towards women in general.

It is very important to analyze news items in terms of gender sensitivity, code of ethics, and the use of derogatory language, as all these have a strong power to influence the readers, listeners, and viewers of media, and to catalyze changes in society.

In this research study, it has been calculated that out of 4,155 news items on women, approximately 90 news items did not follow the code of ethics and approximately 70 news items used derogatory language.

### **Media bias and women in sports**

Sports is still a male-dominated domain, but, media in Pakistan can play a key role in overcoming the barriers regarding women’s participation in sports, thus partially achieving the gender equality goal. The media, however, seem to have a negative effect on the efforts of women in sports. Due to the bias against women, media does not promote the participation of women and girls playing sports in our society.

There is almost no coverage of women in sports at the local competition level, as well as in team sports such as football, netball, handball, hockey, table tennis, etc., despite a relatively high participation rate. Inappropriate pictures of foreign sports women are regularly published in print media. News and pictures (when available) of local sportswomen should replace these pictures.

Media bias is based on certain assumptions about women in sport, which have gone unchallenged. These are:

- Women are not involved in 'serious' sport;
- Women are not interested in sport;
- Stories about women in sport will not attract high sales or ratings; and
- Consumers are not interested in women playing sports.

An overview of print and electronic media publications has shown that due coverage is not given to women in sports in Pakistan. In the news bulletins of the seven television channels monitored during this research, negligible space was given to women in sports. Only 9 percent of the total news items on women in sports were covered in sports news. The T20 Women's World Cup preparation and series was not given due importance on television and radio, as compared to news about men in sports.

### **Media advertisements**

Cultural stereotypes are engrained in both men and women through the media since they are born, and these stereotypes are a possible factor for gender inequality, and the resulting gender wage disparity.

Women have traditionally been viewed as caring and nurturing, and therefore roles that require such skills have been designated to women. While these skills are culturally valued, they are typically associated with domesticity, so occupations requiring these skills are not always economically valued. On the other hand, men have traditionally been viewed as the breadwinners or the workers in the family; therefore, jobs held by men have historically been economically valued. Even today, occupations held by men continue to be economically valued and pay higher wages.

Creative and destructive roles of TV commercials include discrimination against women, which play a huge role in shaping the gender roles in society. Media bias is evidenced in several ways and some of these have been highlighted in this research.

In mass media, through the means of advertisements in newspapers, billboards, TV commercials and programs, and magazines, women are mostly seen in feminine situations. For example, ads with women tend to put them in beauty (modeling, make-up, fashion) and household (cooking appliances, cleaning appliances, and food) themes. Media encourages the general population to judge women by their attractiveness, portraying their self-esteem based on their beauty (furthering their worth as sex objects) and portraying them mostly in housewife roles. On the other hand, mass media tends to portray men in


“manly” roles in advertisements, to be judged primarily on what they do and not on their looks.

In this research, analysis of advertisements has shown that women are:

- Happy when housekeeping
- Preoccupied with appearances
- Looking for more ways to be a consumer
- Desperate to please their children with processed food and toys
- Not knowledgeable about technical things
- Girls are portrayed as working hard in order to look pretty and cool

On the other hand, men are shown as:

- Motivated to relax
- Strong and powerful
- The users of cell phone plans, cars and computers
- Obsessed with their yard
- Unable to do laundry or to cook
- Overjoyed when served food
- Boys must do anything to be tough and manly



### **Checklist for management!**

- Has your staff received training for gender-sensitive reporting?
- Do you have a policy in place for gender-sensitivity?
- What kind of language is used for women when reporting about them?
- Is sexist language defined and forbidden?
- Are women's sports events in Pakistan being reported?



## Chapter 5

### Equality? Working conditions and environment

#### Gender division of news beats

Media houses in Pakistan do not seem to have any strategies or policies to deal with the challenge of women covering only 'soft beats.' This is probably because this issue is not recognized as a stereotype or bias against women by the top management of media houses.

The fact that management in media houses is mostly male-dominated plays a role in determining how women are seen in their organizations. When managers or editors assign beats to their staff they tend to assign hard beats, consisting of politics, economic issues, and sports to men. Females are preferred for covering social issues. Many managers believe that men and women are better suited for specific areas.

There is a need for awareness training of gender roles and issues at the managerial level of media houses. Maybe a quota system for news beats can be devised for male and female reporters.

#### Differences in earnings

Men and women should be treated equally when being offered salary packages. Discrimination should not take place, especially based on the sex of the employee. At the time of recruitment, the candidates should be evaluated on their skills and experience before they are offered higher salary packages than their colleagues in the same positions. After hearing the complaints of most female employees in media houses included in this research, it seems men are getting paid more than women for the same set of skills and the same jobs.

#### Dialogue box 10

A female at a TV channel said, "There are many tribulations faced by women, the most important one is of unequal salary packages for men and women."

#### Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is an area not well understood in media houses of Pakistan. This is mainly due to the lack of awareness and sensitivity towards gender issues. As mentioned earlier in this report, men do not always respect their female colleagues and very often, do not see them as professionals who can do the same work as men themselves. Unfortunately no policy or guidelines are available on this issue in media houses, which makes it difficult to bring justice to the deserving party.

Sexual harassment is not limited to when someone actually touches another person physically. Inappropriate sexual verbal communication and gesturing happens all the time

in workplaces. Both men and women need to be made aware of what harassment means, especially sexual harassment, and what they should not do to avoid harassing other people.

### **Dialogue box 11**

A female employee from a TV channel mentioned, “If you don’t have good relations with your boss, he will not let you make progress and sometimes you can be demoted.”

Women are not the only victims of sexual harassment; men also face this problem at the hands of some women. Training about sexual harassment should be provided to both men and women. Every employee should know his or her rights and should know what to do when they feel they are being harassed. A proper reporting mechanism should be devised to help deal with this problem in media houses.

Currently there is no data available on any specific cases of sexual harassment or discrimination taking place in Pakistani media houses, however, such data should be recorded for future reference. Women who have raised their voices against sexist language or sexual harassment have not been taken seriously and the accused person has been sympathized with while, in some cases, the woman has had to give up her job. This is a sensitive topic, but one that needs to be dealt with using greater sincerity.

### **Favors for job security**

Unfair employee appraisals/evaluations can create a lot of frustration and demoralization among workers. They can create bad feelings, which hinder an employee’s productivity at the workplace. It seems to be a common practice in media houses in Pakistan for managers to ask for favors from their female employees in return for a good evaluation and job security. This is made easy due to a lack of proper Terms of Reference (TOR) for employees and standardized criteria of evaluation. There is a need to improve the whole appraisal process, especially in state-owned media organizations. Annual Confidential Reports (ACR) should not be written on the whims of people, but should follow proper criteria, which is the same for all employees, be they male or female.

### **Dialogue box 12**

A female employee at one of the media organization's said, "I would like to talk about ACRs. We always put our best efforts in our work, but have never received good ACRs because we are not like those of our sisters who usually offer lunch and personal time to their bosses."

Another female employee at the same organization agreed with her and remarked, "Yes, it is because our ACRs do not follow any criteria, they are given on whims. The whole appraisal system has to be corrected."

### **Checklist for management!**

- Is gender awareness and sensitivity built into all reporting requirements?
- Are both women and men afforded the same opportunities of reporting 'hard' and 'soft' beats?
- Are both women and men earning equal salaries for the same job?
- Is there a policy in place for sexual harassment?  
Is sexual harassment well understood by all employees?  
Is there a policy in place for employee evaluations and appraisals?

## Chapter 6

### What do women bring to the media?

#### Why is gender an issue in the media?

Gender is the way in which characteristics are assigned to men and women by the society. Traditionally, in Pakistan the characteristics assigned to men have been greater in value than those assigned to women. This has created an unequal power balance between the two sexes. The biases and prejudices about girls and women in society become the basis for discrimination against their rights.

These biases and prejudices against women show up in the workplace in the form of unequal opportunities. In media houses, in particular, women are not awarded the same news beats as men and they are excluded from top managerial positions.

If we look at who is speaking in the media, those who are quoted and reported, the majority are men. Both men and women have views regarding newsworthy events, but women are made invisible due to the biases and prejudices against them in our society.

When women do appear in the media they fall victim to gender stereotypes. Women are often seen as victims who are suffering in one way or the other. Stories about women are usually not seen on the front pages and are confined to special segments tagged as 'women's issues.'

#### Women role models

There are very few women in senior positions in Pakistan media, but those who are in such positions serve as powerful role models for younger women contemplating their career paths.

Seeing only men in the newsrooms gives the impression that media is a man's field, but this is changing now after a lot of private TV channels and radio stations have opened their doors for women to join the field. Women are encouraged to join these private organizations due to better facilities and comfortable environments for women.

Women in senior positions send the message to other women and men that women have the same abilities, dedication and commitment as men and are capable of handling the same jobs with pure professionalism.

#### Gender specific coverage

The fact that women are underrepresented in newsrooms has an impact on the content on women considered newsworthy, as male reporters, except for a few trained in gender-sensitive reporting, tend to focus their coverage mainly on news and issues about men.

The quantitative analysis done through this research provides a detailed analysis of the coverage of women's issues and news in print and electronic media in Pakistan.

### Occurrence of News Items on Women

#### **Print**

A total of 59,548 news items were published during the research period. The breakdown of the news items according to the papers researched is as follows:

<b>Name of Publication</b>	<b>Number of news items on women</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Dawn (English Daily)	411	4.55 %
Daily Times (English Daily)	594	6.86 %
The News (English Daily)	466	5.24 %
Daily Jang (Urdu Daily)	564	5.99 %
Daily Express (Urdu Daily)	532	6.05 %
Daily Khabrain (Urdu Daily)	1230	9.16 %
Newsline (Monthly magazine)	19	25.68 %
Herald (Monthly magazine)	43	19.11 %
Friday Times (Weekly magazine)	72	14.63 %
Akhbar-e-Jehan (Weekly magazine)	169	29.04 %

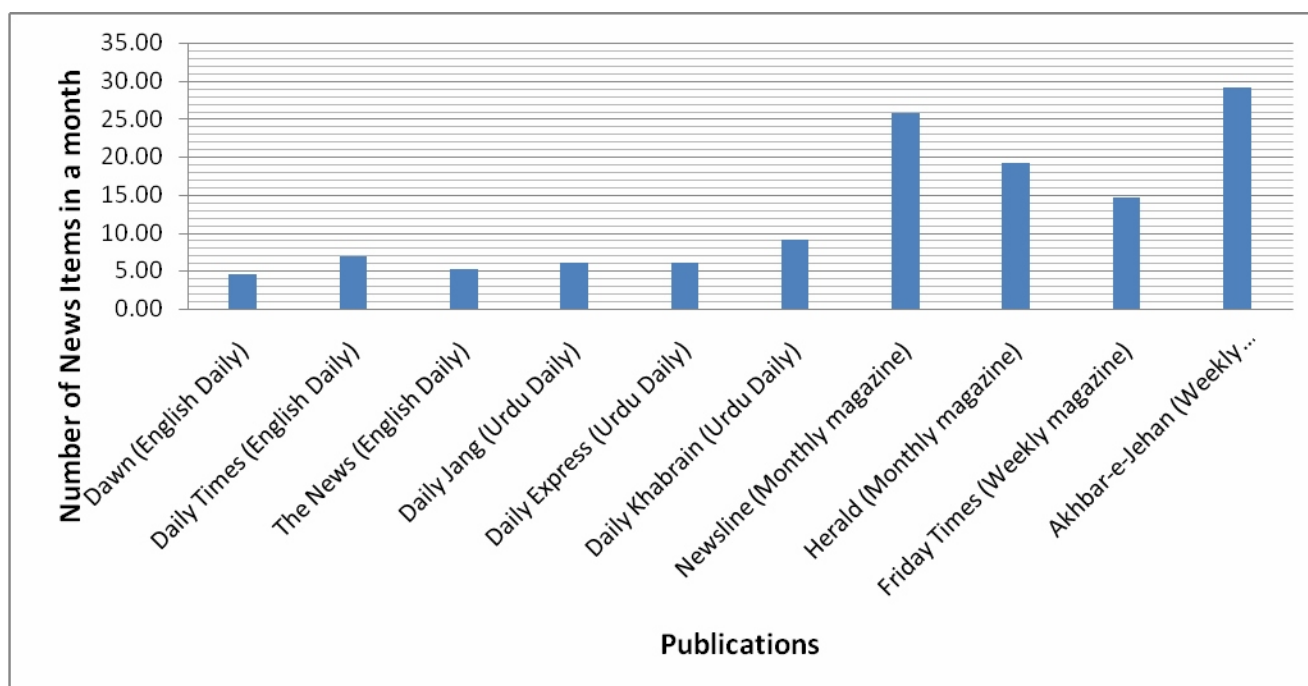
**Table 1: Breakdown of news items in print media per publication**

The results show that all newspapers provided coverage to women, and news involving women, in almost equal proportions. The overall proportion was greater in magazines where women were portrayed in feminine

However, on the average, in an English daily, it was found that there were approximately 594 women related news items out of approximately 8,662 total news items in the newspaper.

A similar trend was observed in an Urdu daily where 532 news items were women related out of a total of 8,794 total news items in the newspaper.

When the total news items in all the newspapers monitored were accounted for, it was found that the news items containing women were 4,155 out of a total of 59,548 news items. This highlights the fact that women are generally underrepresented in the print media.



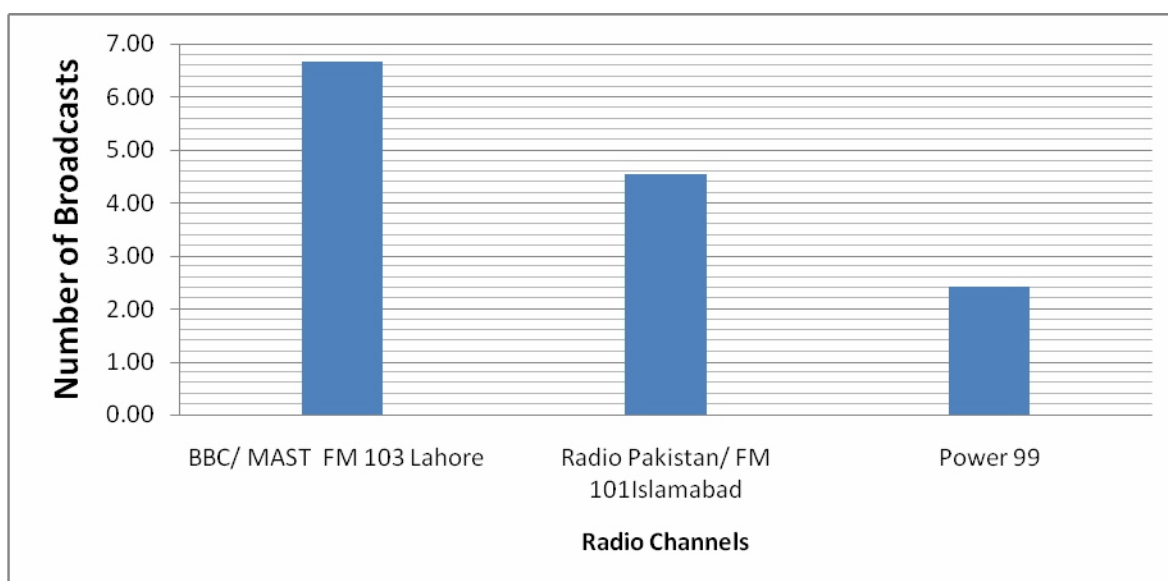
**Figure 1: Breakdown of news items in print media per publication**

#### Radio

Out of a total of 1,983 news items on Radio, broadcasts on women were a total of 270. The breakdown of the news items according to the radio were:

Radio station	Number of broadcasts	Percentage
BBC/ MAST FM 103 Lahore	132	6.66%
Radio Pakistan/ FM 101 Islamabad	90	4.54%
Power 99	48	2.42%

**Table 2: Breakdown of news items on radio per station monitored**



**Figure 2: Breakdown of news items on radio per station monitored**

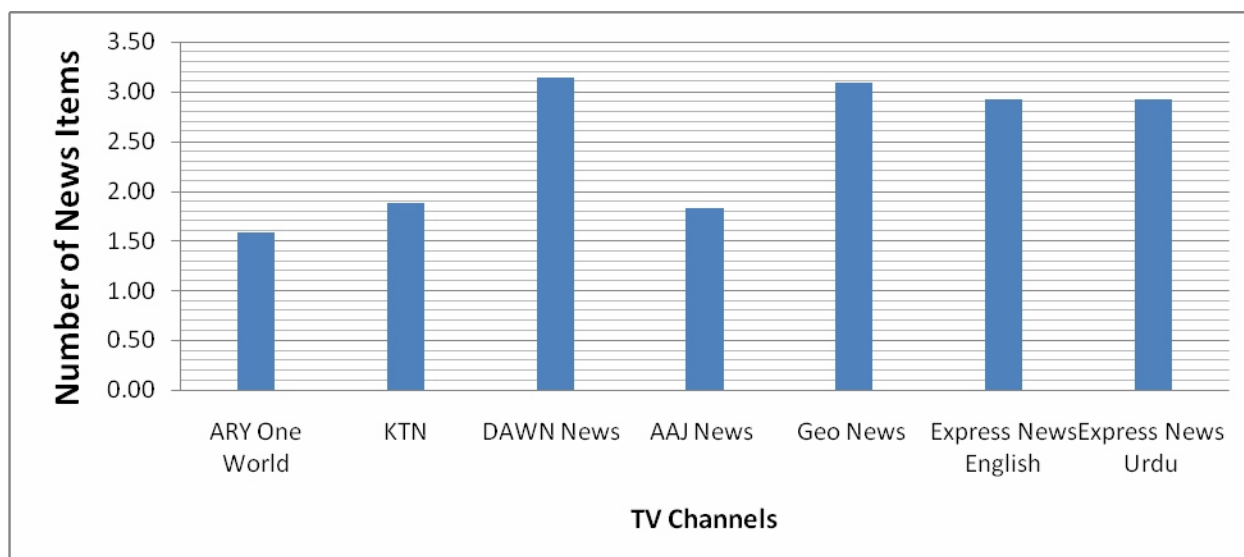
The statistical analysis explained that British Broad Casting Corporation Pakistan had a greater number of broadcasts on women as compared to the other radio stations. This primarily included the reports on women in sports and politics during this period. It was observed that on state owned channels the focus of the news was on the achievements and work of the current government. This included the government's work for IDPs of Swat & Buner. It was also observed that the news about IDPs did not have any specific coverage given to women IDPs.

### Television

Name of news channel	News items on women	% of news items on women
ARY One World	65	1.58 %
KTN	77	1.87 %
DAWN News	129	3.14%
AAJ News	75	1.83%
Geo News	127	3.09%
Express News English	120	2.92%
Express News Urdu	89	2.92%

**Table 3: Breakdown of news items on TV per channel monitored**

A total of 4,107 news items were aired on TV, out of which 682 were women related. More coverage was given to issues about men.



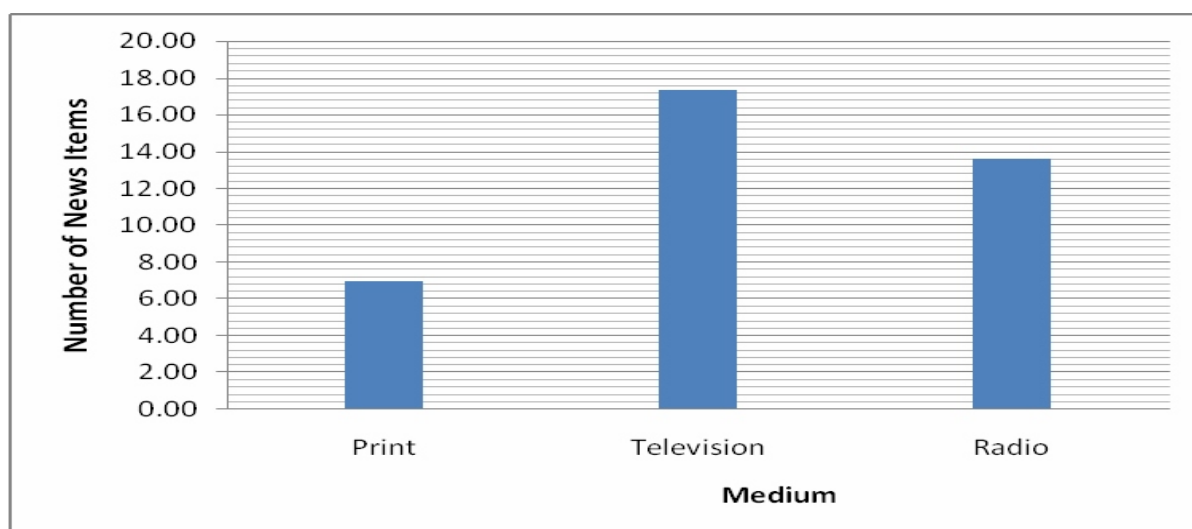
**Figure 3: Breakdown of news items on TV per channel monitored**

#### Consolidated results

Media	Number of News Items
Print	6.98
Television	17.36
Radio	13.62
Total	37.95

**Table 4: Occurrence of news items on women in each medium**

The above results have been summarized in a tabular form below:



**Figure 4: Occurrence of news items on women in each medium**



The results indicate that electronic media, specifically television, had the maximum news coverage on women, followed by radio and print respectively.

The above is a graphical representation of the consolidated results on the occurrence of news items about women on the print and electronic media in Pakistan.

### **Language in which the news was reported**

This section provides a comparative analysis of the news items on women in English, Urdu and regional languages. The selection of specific publications or electronic media channels was based on circulation/ availability in Islamabad.

#### **Print**

The number of news items in Urdu language publications was 61 percent as compared to 39 percent in the English language publications.

#### **Radio**

Radio Stations	Broadcasts on women
Urdu	288
English	3

**Table 5: Breakdown of news items on radio by language**

All the radio stations selected were Urdu language stations so this comparison is based on general news items in the English language.

The findings indicated that there were only three English language news items on women's issues on the radio stations monitored.

#### **Television**

Channels	Number of broadcasts
Urdu	356
English	249
Sindhi	77

**Table 6: Breakdown of news items on TV by language**

Of the seven TV channels monitored, two were in English; one was in a regional language, while four were in Urdu.

The above results show that the maximum number of news items on women, were in Urdu (4 Urdu language channels) followed by the two English language Channels, and then in Regional language.

## Consolidated Results

The consolidated results for this section are not provided since in print media an equal number of Urdu and English newspapers were monitored and analyzed. Whereas in radio there were no programs in English, and for television there was one regional, two English and four Urdu channels monitored. Therefore the consolidated results if prepared would not be based on persistent dataset.

### Duration/space provided to women in news items

This section takes a closer look at the representation of women in the media.

Publications	1-5 inches	6-10 inches	11-15 inches	16-20 inches	>20 inches
Dawn	71	108	75	61	150
Daily Times	97	108	108	88	238
The News	47	82	171	0	262
Daily Jang	407	85	28	32	114
Daily Express	491	126	40	17	93
Khabrain	490	426	229	1	111
Total	1603	935	651	199	968

**Table 7: Breakdown of news items in daily newspapers by size**

## Print

For each publication, the area covered by each news item was measured in inches. The details are provided in the table below:

The figures indicate that the maximum number of news items on women covered an area varying between 1-5 inches. The least number of news items measured 16-20 inches. The large sized news items (measurements ranging in the last two categories) included photographs with the news items. Daily Times (English Daily) provided the maximum

Publications	1-20 inches	21-40 inches	41- 60 inches	61-80 inches	81-100 inches	>101 inches
Newsline	2	7	19	0	9	8
Akhbar-e-Jehan	13	31	21	89	68	7
Herald	10	30	0	9	5	1
Friday Times	26	14	23	3	16	13

**Table 8: Breakdown of news items in magazines by size**

number of large sized news items on women-related news in this category.

The categorization of news items in magazines by the size of news items is provided in the table below:

The maximum number of news items i.e. 101 items, measured in the range of 61-80 inches. Most of these items were photographs. The second highest number of news items measured 81-100 inches, which mostly included advertisements. It is evident from

Duration	Number of news broadcasts
<1 minute	56
1-10 minutes	37
11-20 minutes	2
21-30 minutes	2
31-40 minutes	1
41-50 minutes	1
<50 minutes	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>

**Table 9: Breakdown of news items on radio by duration**

the above findings that news items on women covered the smallest section size in most publications, unless the item was a photograph or advertisement.

### **Radio**

The maximum number of news items, 56, was less than a minute long. This mostly included news items on women in the news bulletins. The longer duration news on women focused on women-related events, music, living, cooking, beauty, and health tips. However, a considerable part of these items did not cover important issues like the crises in Swat and its effects on women, violence against women or the opinions of women experts. The next category with the highest number of news items was the 10-minute one. Again like the print

Duration	Number of news items
< 1 minute	67
1-10 minutes	1134
11-20 minutes	5
21-30 minutes	4
31-40 minutes	2
41-50 minutes	0
> 50 minutes	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1212</b>

**Table 10: Breakdown of news items on TV by duration**

media, women-related news was provided relatively very little airtime during the entire bulletin, if there was any news in the first place!

The above results indicate that the maximum percentage of news items on TV lie in the '1-10 minutes duration' category. The second highest percentage of news items falls in the less than '1-minute duration' category. This is the time accorded to different women related news in the news bulletins. The cumulative result for this section shows that most women related news was provided airtime of less than 1 minute or even lesser time in seconds.

It may be worth mentioning here that certain news on women was given less airtime and priority as compared to similar news not focusing on women. One such example was the sports news bulletin in which a report on training camp of T20 Male Cricket team was given coverage for at least 30 seconds in one bulletin while there was no news report about the training camp of women T20 Cricket team.

### **Breakdown of news items by nature/ theme of news**

The categories specified for this section have been described below:

**News Item theme category guide**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Crime</b>	Crime, bomb blast, assault, burn cases, harassment, drugs, kidnapping, rape, robbery, suicide, violence against women
<b>Development Issues</b>	Education, health, NGOs, medicine, poverty, International Women's day, women empowerment, laws, legislation and legal cases against women
<b>Social News</b>	Art and culture, local and international occasions and events.
<b>Sensitive Issues</b>	'Honour' crimes, women and war
<b>Showbiz News</b>	Fashion, media, actresses, film awards ceremonies etc.
<b>Political</b>	Political news, leaders, parties, elections etc.
<b>Sports</b>	News about sportswomen
<b>Advertisements</b>	Advertisements/ Commercials
<b>Coverage by Women</b>	Reports by women reporters, on various issues.

### **Print**

The news items in various publications have been divided into several categories on the basis of their nature/ theme.

Name of publication	Crime	Developmental Issues	Social News	Sensitive Issues	Showbiz News	Political News	Sports	Advertisements	Coverage by Women
DAWN	102	107	8	25	8	31	51	55	72
Daily Times	37	53	17	14	249	85	68	1	49
The News	26	109	23	23	76	47	55	102	71
Jang	65	70	45	6	83	144	68	71	56
Daily Express	83	103	78	14	110	166	59	55	30
Khabrain	122	49	37	6	157	76	66	9	125
Akhbar-e-Jehan	0	1	8	0	92	9	3	90	31
Herald	1	3	9	1	8	4	1	13	14
Newsline	0	10	0	0	3	1	0	17	5
Friday Times	1	17	9	2	9	8	0	26	25
Total	437	522	234	91	795	571	371	439	478

**Table 11: Breakdown of news items in print by theme/topic per publication**

Category	Number of News items
Crime	437
Developmental issue	522
Social news	234
Sensitive issue	91
Showbiz news	795
Political news	571
Sports	371
Advertisement	439
Coverage by Women	478

**Table 12: Breakdown of news items in print by theme/topic**

### Television

The nature and theme of news items on TV news channels have been categorized in the following.

Category	Number of news items
Crime	228
Developmental issues	182
Social news	18
Sensitive issue	172
Showbiz news	64
Political news	146
Sports	79
Advertisement	226
Coverage by Women	279

**Table 13: Breakdown of news items on television by theme/topic**

The analysis of news items according to their theme/nature showed that the maximum numbers of news items did not fall in any specific category. The second highest number of news items was about crime & advertisements. The crime category news items did not give the legal implications concerning crime incidents. It included news about women as victims of violence, accidents or natural disasters. There were news items showing crime scenes etc, which were not following the code of ethics. The advertisement analysis was done separately.

### Radio

The news items on various radio channels have been divided into several categories on the basis of their nature/ theme.

Theme	Number of news items
Crime	70
Developmental issue	71
Social news	7
Sensitive issue	15
Showbiz news	4
Political news	65
Sports	48
Coverage by Women	26

**Table 14: Breakdown of news items on radio by theme/topic**

The most frequently occurring news was on developmental issues.

### Consolidated Results

The consolidated results for the theme-wise distribution of news items about women in the print and electronic media have been provided as follows:

Category	Print	Radio	Television	Total	Percentage
Crime	437	70	228	735	13.04 %
Developmental issue	522	71	182	775	13.75 %
Social news	234	7	18	259	4.59 %
Sensitive issue	91	15	172	278	4.93 %
Showbiz news	795	4	64	863	15.31 %
Political news	571	65	146	782	13.87 %
Sports	371	48	79	498	8.83 %
Advertisements	439	0	226	665	11.79 %
Coverage by Women	478	26	279	783	13.89 %

**Table 15: Theme-wise breakdown of news of print and electronic media**

The most newsworthy women-related news was that of showbiz, leading at 15%. The second most newsworthy group was of politics, which formed 14 % of the total news items in the media. It must be remembered that this ratio was high due to prominent women figures in politics and not exactly due to the topic of news items, which were mostly not about women's issues.

The coverage of women in development news & crime was also significant at almost 13 percent. The crime category of news items was reported in high proportion in the print media as compared to the electronic media. The least common sections of women's news fell in the miscellaneous and social news, and the sensitive issues category.

Women related news on art, culture, and local events were hardly reported in the news bulletins by the electronic media and in low proportions by the print media.

#### **Favorability of news item on Women**

Every effort has been made to define and identify 'supportive' and 'non-supportive' coverage as objectively as possible. The extremes were simple enough to identify: the use of derogatory language, the inclusion of female voices accompanying stories and commodities that have nothing to do with women-related issues, advertising that reinforces stereotypical role models of women as 'housewives' and as passive recipients of male attention – none of these can be called supportive. Nor can the exclusion of women-related issues from mainstream productions, and their being limited to superficial subjects such as fashion and 'beauty' issues be considered supportive, in terms of this research. It follows, then, that coverage that takes gender-specific issues seriously and objectively and that considers women's multiple perspectives on issues, and that does so using the language of analysis, can be identified as 'supportive'.

'Non-supportive' treatment of a news item on the other hand would indicate biased reporting, the use of stereotypical images and analysis in which women are not portrayed as equal citizens and their genuine issues are misreported or ignored. The favourability of a news item has been rated 'neutral' in cases where it refers to a supportive balanced, unbiased and factual coverage of women-related news. The guide given below was provided to all the media monitors for clarity:

### News item favorability Guide:

1. Supportive	2. Non Supportive	3. Neutral
Any news that provides complete facts, all sides of the story, legal, religious and moral aspects, encouraging women and creating awareness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stereotypical Image (Image of women as items of co modification or commercialization, or in the role of a submissive marginalized group)</li> <li>2. Use of Derogatory language (words, style, connotation etc.)</li> <li>3. Misreported (not complete picture of story/ facts missing/ views missing, etc.)</li> <li>4. Underrepresented (Women not given proper space to give views comments, issues not given due importance)</li> </ol>	Any news item that is given as an objective news

### Print

Publication	Supportive	Non-Supportive	Neutral
Dawn	158	20	261
Daily Times	254	248	424
The News	179	99	286
Jang	109	67	807
Daily Express	106	64	909
Khabrain	101	325	1380
Herald	97	64	184
Akhbar-e-Jehan	97	94	332
Newsline	118	64	144
Friday Times	137	67	6
Total	1356	1112	4733
Percentage	19 %	15%	66%

Table 16: Breakdown of news items in print by favorability



The above data indicates that only 19 percent of the total news items were supportive of women. It is very encouraging to find that a large percentage of the news items in the print media provide an unbiased and balanced view on women's issues. However, the presence of neutral and non-supportive content, although in a smaller proportion, shows that this favourability is not a result of good editorial policies or ethical codes. If such policies had existed no negative content would go in print. There seems to be a lack of awareness of gender-just and investigative reporting standards. The negative content printed may not necessarily be the result of a deliberate action but lack of awareness of the reporters. Sixty-six percent of the news items were neutral in nature and a relatively low proportion of news items were non-supportive.

### Television

The favourability ratings of news items on TV channels are given below:

Channel	Supportive	Non-Supportive	Neutral
ARY One World	56	15	60
KTN	43	6	90
DAWN News	43	3	52
Aaj News	35	6	124
Geo	40	9	148
Express English	47	1	154
Express Urdu	58	5	119
Total	322	45	747
Percentage	28.90	4.04	67.06

**Table 17: Breakdown of news items on TV by favorability**

The majority, 67 percent of news items on television were neutral in their treatment of women-related news. The percentage of news items that treated women news as supportive was 29 percent, with a very small but not negligible proportion of non-supportive news items. A few news items that were rated non-supportive were about women from showbiz who had been personally targeted for their relationships with men in showbiz.

### Radio

The favourability ratings of news broadcasts on radio have been provided below:

Station	Supportive	Non-Supportive	Neutral
BBC / FM MAST 103 Lahore	11	0	143
Radio Pakistan FM 101 Islamabad	1	0	73
Power 99	2	0	39

**Table 18: Breakdown of news items on radio by favorability**

Most of the women related news items on Radio were neutral. One reason for finding no non-supportive items on radio could be that majority of broadcasts that qualified for inclusion in this analysis were aired from State-owned radio stations. It is observed that these stations do ensure that reports are presented according to journalistic standards and have good editorial and censorship policies. On the other hand, another reason could be that these stations hardly report any sensitive, women-related concerns, so the issue of favourability of news items does not arise.

#### **Categorization of news item by gender of reporter**

##### **Print**

This section analyses the media on participation of women as news reporters, journalists, presenters, newsreaders and anchorpersons, etc.

Publications	News Items by Female Journalists	News Items by Male Journalists	Not Specified	Total
Dawn	51	99	324	474
The News	53	25	177	255
Daily Times	45	44	434	523
Newsline	15	4	16	35
Friday Times	23	16	52	91
Jang	25	49	327	401
Daily Express	25	38	437	500
Khabrain	62	43	770	875
Akhbar-e-Jehan	22	64	0	86
Herald	26	10	0	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>2537</b>	<b>3276</b>

**Table 19: Breakdown of news items in print by gender of journalists**

In the figures obtained from the above analysis, male journalists reporting on female issues was 12 percent, whereas the female journalists were 11 percent. The rest of the news items mentioned other sources (AFP, Reuters, special correspondent, etc.), but did not specify whether the reporter was male or female. Hence, it cannot be safely assumed that men and women reporters in the print media exist in equal proportions.

## Radio

Presenters/ RJs	Number of news broadcasts
Male	122
Female	120
Both	16
Total	258

**Table 20: Breakdown of news items on radio by gender of presenters**

In the radio programs monitored, it was evident from the figures obtained, after the content analysis, that male & female presenters in radio were equal.

## Television

There were more male presenters, newsreaders, and anchorpersons in TV as compared to women.

Channel	Male	Female	Both	Total
ARY One World	59	47	27	133
KTN	112	29	0	141
DAWN NEWS	100	100	0	200
Aaj News	20	84	63	167
Geo	5	16	179	200
Express English	105	81	26	212
Express Urdu	92	29	64	185

**Table 21: Breakdown of news items on TV by gender of presenters**

The above figures show that the number of male presenters/newsreaders is greater than that of females, in the electronic media. Out of 31 percent news items presented exclusively by women, 40 percent by men, and 29 percent by both men and women, there seems to be some gender discrimination at this front. This leads us to think that women do participate, but only at superficial levels in the media. In comparison the number of women as newsmakers or decision makers in the media is negligible.

### Categorization of news item by format & placement in print media

#### News Item format category guide for Print Media

Category	Details
<b>News</b>	Columns, cover story, headline news, or any news on the selected pages of the daily newspapers
<b>Feature</b>	Feature
<b>Advertisement</b>	This includes all types of advertisements such as fashion, industrial, products etc.
<b>Photograph</b>	Any photograph with a woman in it
<b>Opinion</b>	This section includes any report, reader mail or independent opinions by journalists
<b>Article</b>	Article
<b>Editorial</b>	Editorials on women issues
<b>Cartoon</b>	Cartoon or caricatures of or about women

**Table 22: Description of categories for various formats of news items**

Name of Publication	News	Feature	Advertisement	Photograph	Opinion	Article	Editorial	Cartoon	Coverage by Women
<b>DAWN</b>	293	3	56	47	15	41	1	1	1
<b>Daily Times</b>	441	1	76	165	28	30	2	4	0
<b>The News</b>	323	11	109	60	12	54	1	1	0
<b>Jang</b>	386	0	131	204	0	30	0	1	0
<b>Daily Express</b>	544	2	87	264	1	34	2	0	0
<b>Khabrain</b>	822	0	294	706	0	65	0	2	0
<b>Akhbar-e-Jehan</b>	7	2	102	21	0	102	0	0	0
<b>Herald</b>	7	0	13	0	0	14	0		
<b>Newsline</b>	165	12	67	31	4	32	0	1	5
<b>Friday Times</b>	11	34	22	2	6	0	0	4	12
<b>Total</b>	2999	65	957	1500	66	402	6	14	18
<b>Percentage</b>	49.76	1.08	15.88	24.89	1.10	6.67	0.10	0.23	0.30

**Table 23: Breakdown of news items in print media by format per publication**

Category	Number of News Items	Percentage
News	2999	49.76
Feature	65	1.08
Advertisement	957	15.88
Photograph	1500	24.89
Opinion	66	1.1
Article	402	6.67
Editorial	6	0.1
Cartoon	14	0.23
Coverage by Women	18	0.3

**Table 24: Breakdown of news items in print media by format**

The maximum number of women related items were in ‘news’ format, which formed 50 percent of the total items. Photographs of women formed the second highest appearing category in print at 25 percent. Editorials on women-related issues were almost non-existent.

## PLACEMENT

The categorization of news items by **placement** resulted in the following results. This categorization does not apply to news items in magazines.

Publication	National/ International	Editorial/ Opinion	Metropolitan	Sports	Showbiz	Front page	Back page	Miscellaneous
DAWN	190	34	64	52	0	20	24	12
Daily Times	44	26	17	33	90	11	15	116
The News	157	63	145	62	78	24	15	12
Jang	218	30	409	8	8	0	0	0
Daily Express	200	42	346	48	84	0	49	49
Khabrain	378	63	377	125	333	0	15	15
Total	1187	258	1358	328	593	55	118	204

**Table 25: Breakdown of news items in print media by placement per publication**

Category	Percentage	Number of news items
National / International	29	1187
Editorial/ Opinion	6	258
Metropolitan	33	1358
Sports	8	328
Showbiz	14	593
Front page	1	55
Back page	3	118
Miscellaneous	5	204

**Table 26: Breakdown of news items in print media by placement**

The maximum number of news items on women, were found in the Metropolitan section of the daily newspapers. However, a large number of these news items were in National and International sections where the news items were mostly accompanied by photographs.

#### **Checklist for management!**

- Do you have a gender policy?
- How is the policy implemented? What are the outputs?
- Is there a high level commitment to the policy?
- Does the policy cover gender specific coverage?

# Chapter 7

## Bringing about a change for the better

### Strategies and measures to achieve gender equality

All people have the right to develop their abilities and choose opportunities in life without being limited by their sex and gender roles given to them by society.

Media houses need to put in place strategies and policies to promote gender equality; affirmative action; mentoring; career pathing and promotions, among others.

In order to bring change, media houses will have to take strict measures to encourage more women to join their organizations. Increasing the number of women in the newsrooms will help women's voices to be heard. At this point, most stories are told by men, and the views of women are missing from media content. It is important to realize that men and women have different perspectives when analyzing issues and under representation of women has an impact on news content.

In order to bring more women to newsrooms, media houses will have to work on building more comfortable environments in their organizations, which will help them retain women workers. A lack of training opportunities becomes an obstacle for women to excel at their jobs and they find it difficult to survive in the organization. Mentoring and training opportunities will give women professional skills and the confidence to prove their capabilities. Another issue that needs consideration of the management of media houses is unequal salaries of men and women. Salaries should be based on professional skills and work experience rather than the sex of the reporter.

It should be noted, however, that women are to be facilitated to excel in mainstream media with training and professional skills, like their male colleagues. This in no way should mean that they be given special status just because they are women.

### Affirmative action

It is necessary for media houses to have an affirmative action policy in place. If the law does not prescribe a specific affirmative action policy, then the media houses should make their own policy. It should spell out precise quotas for male and female representation.

Through this research we have found that underlying factors, such as family restrictions, male dominance, unfavorable workplace environment, discriminatory salary packages, lack of appreciation, lack of adequate transport facilities, lack of separate toilets, unpredictable and late working hours with no flexibility, often result in women avoiding or leaving the media profession and seeking more comfortable and rewarding work environments.

A committee for affirmative action was formed for women in media, as a result of a suggestion made by Mr. Amir Mateen, Senior journalist, at the first roundtable conference held during this research process. Some of the journalists involved in the discussions made

a commitment to formulate a committee for affirmative action. The committee held its first meeting in early April 2009, to chalk out its line of action on how to get all media houses involved in this process. Follow up of this commitment is necessary to make sure efforts are not lost and the working conditions of media houses are improved to encourage more women to join and feel encouraged to build their careers in media.

### **Education and capacity building**

#### **Dialogue box 13**

With reference to interacting with women in media organizations to find out and solve their problems, Mr. Amir Mateen, Senior journalist said, “.... the number of news editors is not more than 20, so a talk can be organized with them to find out the problems women are facing. Although, it is a difficult task, but sometimes you can invite them in your place and sometimes you will have to go to them to talk about these issues. But it will have an impact. Secondly, policies in organizations should be made to make women secure.”

Students of mass communication should be trained at their organizations. Exposure to practical work through internships, technical training, research facilities, and other resources, can prepare women for fieldwork and technical tasks in the media profession. Such trainings should be formally provided to the students by their educational institutions.

The students should also be taught media ethics to bring about a positive change at the workplace. Students need to be sensitized about media before they practically enter the field.

Some universities in Pakistan are trying to add gender issues in their course outlines. For instance, the University of Peshawar is trying to add gender issues in their courses. Their Department of Mass Communication will coordinate with the Department of Gender Studies to make this happen. All universities in Pakistan should add gender issues in every discipline being taught at their university. And Departments of Mass Communication at universities should teach gender-sensitive reporting to all students of communication.

It was discussed during the discussions held at the National Conference in Karachi that parents should also be counseled to let their daughters join the media profession after graduating in mass communication. It is common to see a lot of girls studying mass communication, but then they are not seen working for the media. This is because their parents usually do not think that their daughters will be well respected if they choose this profession. It is important for the departments of journalism and mass communication at universities to counsel parents so that they are comfortable with sending their girls into the media workforce.

For the capacity building of employees, the media organization should make sure that all employees have access to staff development programs. These programs should be offered at suitable hours and should target both men and women for training.



at suitable hours and should target both men and women for training.

## **Mentoring**

When women join media organizations in Pakistan, they are faced with the absence of a good coach or mentor to help them learn the ropes quickly. Most of the training and learning takes place on the job in media houses. In media you are thrown in at the deep end and you have to swim your way through to the shore. It helps if you can have someone guide you, but for women in Pakistani media houses this is not always an option. There are very few women working in senior positions, and since cultural norms and unfavorable environments in media houses do not encourage women to talk freely to men, women are left to their own devices to learn as quickly as they can.

The situation is quite different for men working in the same media houses as they do not have any cultural constraints as far as communicating freely with other men is concerned. They are able to learn on the job very quickly and thus are able to show better quality of work sooner than their female colleagues. Women also have constraints on travel. There are certain areas not thought to be suitable for women to travel to, whereas men are able to go anywhere they like and therefore gain greater experience, which helps them excel at their jobs.

It is, therefore, necessary to devise a method of mentoring, especially for women at media houses, so that they have equal opportunities and are able to compete with men on equal footing.

## **Career pathing and promotions**

It is important for media houses to have clearly defined and transparent promotion policies and a minimum quota for women at all levels of the organization. They should take measures to assist women to achieve these positions on merit through career pathing. A roster should be kept of potential women candidates for top posts. When recruiting, media houses should advertise using a variety of communication channels, including direct interaction, that ensure men and women are equally reached.

Women should be hired on full-time basis; the same way men are hired, rather than being hired on a part-time or free-lance basis. This will create greater job security for women encouraging them to think of making a strong career in the field.

### **Checklist for management!**

- What strategies and measures are being taken to achieve gender equality at your organization?
- Do you have an affirmative action policy?
- Does the policy spell out precise quotas or targets for male and female representation?
- Do you target women for training?
- Do you have mentorship programs in place, especially for women?
- Do you have a clearly defined and transparent promotion policy?

# Chapter 8

## Gender sensitization training and gender audit

### Gender-sensitization training

There is a need for gender-sensitization trainings and trainings to create awareness about women's rights. These trainings should be for both male and female employees, as both sexes need to be sensitized. There are many women out there who are unaware of their own rights and do not take a stand for themselves when they should.

Keeping in mind the prejudices and the under-representation of women in media today, the gender-sensitization trainings should focus on the following objectives:

- Increase sensitivity towards gender issues through creating understanding of sex and gender concepts
- Develop understanding about stereotyped portrayal of women in media
- Discuss the International obligations/commitments made by Pakistan
- Discuss the general problems with reporting on women's issues
- Develop skills to enhance the quality of reporting on women's issues
- Discuss the gender-sensitive code of ethics for media in Pakistan
- Set goals and objectives to overcome the gender issues in media

The target audience for the gender-sensitization trainings should be journalists/reporters, editors, sub-editors, media managers, and directors. Everyone, at all levels of the media organizations should be given gender-sensitization trainings.

### Dialogue box 14

During the National Conference in Karachi on October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2009, Mr. Talat Aslam, Editor, The News, Karachi said, "When I joined my organization in Karachi, we had a single female reporter and a few women on the desk as well. Today, the number of women has increased and they are also working in prominent positions, such as the editorial pages and business pages. I would like to say that the situation is changing in media organizations. I think we should initially take small steps to move ahead, like providing separate washrooms for women.

I have been advantaged to work in a female environment at The Herald for eight to ten years. It automatically sensitized me..."

## Gender audit of media

A gender audit is an assessment tool that provides an organization with the opportunity to assess work place practices and environment, content, language, visuals, packaging, advertising, the roles of government, regulators, and training institutions. A list of key questions enables the identification of gender opportunities and gaps in the organization. For example, a gender audit of media policies may show that a newsroom has instituted gender-sensitive language guidelines for editors and reporters to follow (opportunity), but there is no overall gender editorial policy in place (gap). The strategy would then be for a gender editorial policy to be developed and implemented.

### Dialogue box 15

During the National Conference held in Karachi on October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2009, Ms. Afshan Subohi from Dawn, said, “In many countries, organizations are required to provide a gender audit report, which includes the financial statement as well. I think we should try to lobby for it.”

Gender audits are done by the International Labor Organization in Pakistan as well as by some independent consultants. Gender audits are usually undertaken by the auditors taking the time to establish a trusted relationship with a media institution. Media managers and senior management work with the auditors to gather information about how they can bring changes to improve the work practices at their organizations.

It should be noted here that gender audits are not undertaken to bring shame to a media institution. They are done to improve how the media organization does its work.

The International Labor Organization has created a gender equality tool called, “A Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators.” This is a very good manual for reference, and it is available on the Internet (<http://www.ilo.org/publns>)

### Checklist for management!

- Has your staff received gender-sensitization training?
- Is the concept of a gender audit understood?

# Chapter 9

## Media and the rights of women in Pakistan

This chapter has been added to represent the Pakistan context on media and the rights of women in Pakistan. It gives a brief outline of various commitments adopted by Pakistan and their implementation.

### Constitution of Pakistan

The Constitution of Pakistan (1973) guarantees equality between women and men. It has the following provisions for affirmative action for women:

**Article 25 states:** “All citizens are equal before the law and are entitled to equal protection before the law; there shall be no discrimination on the basis of sex alone; nothing in this Article shall prevent the State from making any special provision for the protection of women and children.”

**Article 34 states:** “Steps shall be taken to ensure the full participation of women in all spheres of national life.”

### International commitments adopted by Pakistan

Pakistan has also adopted several of the international commitments that protect basic human rights and gender equality. These include:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) (The United Nations Charter (1945) “. . . to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women. . .” The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) “Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion. . .”)
- International Labor Standards and ILO Basic Human Rights Conventions, e.g. Freedom of Association and Protection of the Rights to Organize 1948; Discrimination in Employment and Occupation 1958;
- The Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (1985);
- Education for All, Justine, 1990;
- Convention on the Rights of the Child, (CRC) ratified by Pakistan in 1990;
- Agenda 21, United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio, 1992;
- Vienna Declaration and Program of Action, Vienna Conference on Human Rights, 1993;
- The Program of Action, International Conference on Population and Development,

- Cairo, 1994;
- Platform for Social Development, World Summit on Social Development, Copenhagen, 1995;
- Beijing Platform for Action, Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 1995;
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, (CEDAW), Pakistan acceded in 1996.

### **Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action (1995)**

The Government of Pakistan is making efforts to fulfill its international and national commitments to protect women's rights. These include the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; National Plan of Action for Women; National Policy for Development and Empowerment of Women; Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); and SAARC Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution.

As a follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women, 1995 and to implement the Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Pakistan launched a National Plan of Action (NPA) for women in August 1998. It is a guideline document, which outlines strategic objectives/actions for social, economic, political and legal empowerment of Pakistani women. The NPA emphasizes that women's empowerment may be achieved through recognition of women's human rights, their right to political participation and decision-making at all levels.

### **Pakistan's National Plan of Action for Women**

The Government of Pakistan released a National Plan of Action for Women in September 1998, which articulated powerfully the women and poverty nexus, labeling women as 'vital contributors to the economic survival of poor households' and recognizing the double burden of productive and household chores for working women.

The plan envisaged that 'economic empowerment and recognition of their contribution would promote women's image of themselves in the family, community and nation.'

Gender mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels.

The ultimate goal of this strategy is to achieve gender equality. Some of the critical areas of concern identified are the following:

1. Women and Poverty
2. Education and Training of Women
3. Women and Health

4. Violence Against Women
5. Women and Armed Conflict
6. Women and the Economy
7. Women in Power and Decision Making. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has the right to take part in the Government of his/her country
8. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women. The first World Conference on Women, in 1975 called for the establishment of national machineries for the advancement of women
9. Human Rights of Women
10. Women and the Media. This includes: (i) Stereotype attitude towards women's participation in the whole communicating system; (ii) Lack of code of ethics or policies regarding the depiction of women; and (iii) Lack of women in policy making and decision making
11. Women and the Environment
12. The Girl Child
13. Girls & Women with Disabilities

The first 12 are the “12 Areas of Concern” of the Beijing Platform For Action, while the 13th was included by Pakistan in its programs.

### **Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)**

Adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) consists of a preamble and 30 articles. It is often referred to as the International Bill of Rights for Women.

CEDAW defines discrimination against women as “...any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.”

By accepting the Convention, States commit themselves to undertake a series of measures to end discrimination against women in all forms, including:

- To incorporate the principle of equality of men and women in their legal system, abolish all discriminatory laws and adopt appropriate ones prohibiting discrimination against women;
- To establish tribunals and other public institutions to ensure the effective protection of women against discrimination; and
- To ensure elimination of all acts of discrimination against women by persons, organizations or enterprises.

The Convention is the only human rights treaty, which affirms the reproductive rights of women and targets culture and tradition as influential forces shaping gender roles and family relations. It also, affirms women's rights to acquire, change or retain their nationality and the nationality of their children.

The implementation of CEDAW is one of Pakistan's key international commitments relating to women. In this regard, the project 'CEDAW Follow-up and Implementation' has been launched to undertake follow-up and implementation of CEDAW. The Ministry of Women Development is the designated national focal machinery reporting on its implementation. Pakistan's combined, initial, second and third periodic report was examined by the UN CEDAW Committee of Experts in its 38<sup>th</sup> session, held in New York during 14<sup>th</sup> May ~ 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2007 through an interactive dialogue with the Pakistan delegation.

### **Pakistan's response to the international commitments**

As in many other member states, most women in Pakistan do not enjoy many of the rights laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Despite efforts of the Government, many NGOs, CBOs and other women's organizations, there remains in Pakistan, as in many other member states of the United Nations, a significant disparity between these statements of principle and day-to-day reality.

Gender disparity can be seen, for example, through the lens of the gender-related development index (GDI) and the gender empowerment measurement (GEM), both introduced in the 1995 UNDP Human Development Report. Pakistan's GDI ranking was 120th out of 146 countries whilst its GEM ranking is 92nd out of 94 countries. These rankings were based upon: literacy rates; gross primary enrolment; maternal mortality; mortality rate for females; labor force participation; earned income share; seats in Parliament; and top administrative/managerial jobs.

Since the publication of these rankings a number of steps have been taken in Pakistan to promote the rights of women, and Pakistan has been seeking to operationalize its commitments in a variety of ways in collaboration with UN and other Agencies.

- Commenced an unprecedented program for the empowerment of women through a full-fledged Ministry of Women Development, acting as the national focal machinery for the advancement of women.
- The Ministry developed and implemented its gender agenda through three 5-Year Development Plan periods, 1998-2013.
- Changed the age-old welfare approach to long-term realizable development goals.
- Adopted a National Plan of Action (NPA) outlining 184 actions in "12 Areas of Concern" of the Beijing Platform For Action including the agenda on Girls & Women with Disabilities
- National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) established in 2000, with a mandate to examine the relevance and efficacy of all policies, programs and

- measures to the core issue of women development and gender equality.
- 42 Focal Points established in line Ministries/Departments of the Government to ensure that programs planned and executed are gender sensitive, especially effective in sensitive Ministries of Interior, Law & Justice, Parliamentary Affairs, Health & Education.



# Chapter 10

## Conclusions and recommendations

The image of women portrayed in the media seems to have improved over the years. The increased participation of women in all walks of life and growth and freedom of the media, both print and electronic, has made a difference, but still not enough is being done. There is a lot of room for improvement, as media still tends to portray women as objects and/or victims. Women are under-represented in the media and are excluded from top positions in media houses.

The findings of this research indicate that news reports about women's issues, and those involving women, need fundamental changes. Women are under-represented and a proportion of news about them, though small, is biased and unfair. This journalistic stance, however, may not be deliberate, but rather the result of certain concepts and biases being ingrained into a society, that has come to accept things without questioning them. There is a need to train journalists in order to increase their awareness levels and to increase their capacity to differentiate between balanced, gender-just reporting as opposed to biased and gender insensitive reporting.

The continued stereotyping of women in media is a result of established norms and values present, not only in the media, but in all institutions of the society. Self inflicted biases and family mind sets discourage women to enter the media industry and the representation of women in this industry continues to reflect stereotypical attitudes that are an impediment in building equal and democratic institutions in our society.

The increase in the numbers of women in important fields, has not directly affected their access to power and decision-making in media organizations. Women are also not able to influence media policies.

Gender sensitivity needs to be highlighted in media policies and programs. Certain assumptions and positions of women reinforce gender discrimination. Women media practitioners continue to face gender-based discrimination.

The media enterprises that women usually work for are driven by profit and gender issues are not seen as important. Continued negative portrayal and representation of women may be linked to the lack of national media codes and their implementation.

## Recommendations

The key recommendations for follow-up include:

- Affirmative actions discussed in this report should be followed at every possible level. The underlying factors like family restrictions, male dominance, unfavorable workplace environment, discriminatory salary packages, lack of appreciation, lack of security services, transport facilities, lack of separate toilet facilities, inflexible working hours (adjustments in late working hours), often result in women avoiding this profession and seeking more comfortable and rewarding work environments.

- Creating a congenial workplace environment for women is extremely important. Women at the workplace should be provided with equal opportunities and facilities in a way that they can comfortably work, perform and progress in the field regardless of their gender.
- There is a requirement to hire more women in the field of media. The aim should be to give women a better understanding of their issues and their presence in the field. This can lead to better representation of their problems. Women need to be encouraged to join the field of media.
- There should be collaboration between media agencies and educational institutions to organize seminars, workshops and talks on the subject.
- Hard work, perseverance, positive attitudes, and a positive approach should be encouraged to help solve most of the issues.
- Students of mass communication should be trained at their organizations. Exposure to practical work through internships, technical training, research facilities, and other resources, can prepare women for fieldwork and technical tasks in the media industry. Such trainings should be formally provided to the students by their educational institutions. The students should also be taught media ethics to bring about a positive change. Students need to be sensitized about media before they practically enter the field. They need to differentiate between good and bad, as this can help them follow objectivity and neutrality.
- Parents of girls studying journalism and mass communication need to be counseled to let their girls join the media field. The teachers and counselors at universities should counsel the parents to increase their comfort level.
- Universities in Pakistan should include gender studies in their course outlines.
- More representation of women in decision-making positions should be encouraged. It is important to have women in the newsrooms, especially at the decision-making level, such as editors. Increased participation of women in media as decision-makers and newsmakers is required to highlight news in a gender-sensitive manner and from a woman's perspective.
- Gender-sensitization of men is required. Media has traditionally been a field, which has always remained male dominated. The ratio of male-female workers in the media is heavily imbalanced, tilting in the favor of men. The number of sensitizers is less than those to be sensitized.
- The focus of media needs to be shifted from sex appeal or physical beauty of women to sell a product to women working in all fields, including unconventional jobs. The stereotype that entails showcasing of women as defenseless, submissive, suffering victims needs to be changed.

- The media should aim towards reducing sensational news about women and the co modification of women and their issues. A gender-sensitive approach should be adopted.
- The trend to report women's issues as issues of an under-privileged group in our society rather than, as mainstream issues must be changed.
- Inappropriate pictures of foreign sports women are regularly published in print media. News and pictures (when available) of local sportswomen should replace these pictures.
- Uncaptioned pictures from gatherings and social events, without the permission of the persons photographed should not be published.
- Women's issues should be given proper space and placing. The aim should be to increase coverage of women-related news in a manner that breaks negative stereotypes and helps to bring about positive behavioral changes in the society and encourages acceptance of women as equal beings.
- The Code of Ethics formulated and presented by Uks addresses different aspects of gender sensitivity in the print media, including right to privacy, pictorial depiction of women, rectifying under-representation of women and projection of gender roles in advertisements, amongst other things. There is a requirement of institutionalizing a common Code of Ethics for the betterment of the industry.
- Media should give more space and time to investigative reports and analysis of the deeply rooted cultural and institutional constraints that prevent Pakistani women from playing a fulfilling role in the development of their society. This way, many of the deeply rooted ills will be identified and debated.
- Formation of a committee for affirmative action for women in media. An important outcome of the first roundtable conference during this research was the commitment by some journalists (Amir Mateen, Zaffar Abbas, Mohammad Malick, Mazhar Abbas and some others) to formulate a committee for affirmative action for women in the media. This committee held its first meeting in early April 2009, to chalk out its line of action on how to get all the media houses involved in this process. There should be follow up meetings.

## List of resources

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Najam, Neshay. *The Status of Women in Pakistan: A Muslim majority state and the 21<sup>st</sup> century* (Lahore, Pakistan)

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Saleem, Shokat. 2007. *Portrayal of Women in Media* (Pak Tribune, Discussion Forum)

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## About the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars

The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars is the living, national memorial to President Woodrow Wilson. It was established by Congress in 1968 and is headquartered in Washington, D.C. It is a nonpartisan institution, supported by public and private funds, engaged in the study of national and world affairs. The Center establishes and maintains a lively, neutral forum for free and informed dialogue. The mission of the Center is to commemorate the ideals and concerns of Woodrow Wilson by providing a link between the world of ideas and the world of policy, and by fostering research, study, discussion, and collaboration among a full spectrum of individuals concerned with policy and scholarship in national and world affairs.



## About ML Resources

ML Resources Social Vision is the strategic philanthropy arm of a private investment firm in Washington, D.C. Using an innovative profit-sharing model, the philanthropy division of ML Resources, LLC applies our founder's spirit of sharing and tolerance to the development of socially responsible partnerships and philanthropic projects. Social Vision engages in causes geared toward capacity building and institution strengthening, and provides the support to ensure their expansion and success. The division also aims to bridge the gap between the West and the Islamic World, particularly Pakistan, by promoting understanding and facilitating necessary partnerships.



## About Uks Research Center for Women and Media

'Uks' is an Urdu term meaning 'reflection'. Founded in 1997, Uks Research, Resource and Publication Centre on Women and Media has, since then, been working tirelessly and with continued commitment and passion on promoting a neutral, balanced and unbiased approach to women and women's issues within, and through the media.

The Pakistani Women's Media Network (PWMN) launched in May 2008, is an outcome of this decade's struggle that gained pace in 2002, with the publication of '*Changing Images*', a national study on monitoring and sensitization of the print media on the portrayal of women. The idea of forming PWMN crystallized in 2003, during the formulation and then dissemination of addresses journalistic codes and ethics for gender justice in the media. PWMN has now taken formal shape as a nationwide network.

In 2003, Uks became the first Civil Society Organization in Pakistan with an independent radio production house and an all female team of journalists and broadcasters to run it. It has to its credit different radio productions including the Meri Awaz Sunno (Listen to my Voice). Several FM/AM radio stations air the programs produced by Uks, with a listenership in Pakistan as well as globally. The main focus of these programs is women and human rights and the motto is "Giving Voice to the Voiceless."



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