

## MAJOR CHALLENGES FOR MEDIA EMPLOYEES IN PAKISTAN: DISPARITY OF RESOURCES BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE JOURNALISTS

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### ABSTRACT

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This study presents the working conditions of media employees in Pakistan and the problems being faced by them. The study questions were targeted to answer the overall level of job satisfaction for working conditions in general and across media organizations as perceived by male and female journalists. Furthermore, the study examined the status of women journalists in media organizations of Pakistani focusing on their position and dignity level in media houses, opportunities for their career growth, and hindrances created in their prosperity in terms of discrimination or harassment, their career advancement, and the role that harassment and discrimination play in professional attainment. It finds that society's distinct individuals are based on gender. This stratification cause inequality especially unequal distribution of power among media personals. Gender as a normative ideal is defined by the nature of media organizations and the hierarchy of power that exists within media organizations. Pakistan, as a patriarchal society, is still facing the hardships of gender disparity. Primarily the study is focused on exploring numbers and, more critically, where the women are and how they perform their journalistic duties with the challenges they confront and making progress in their careers. The study is conducted through a web survey engaging male and female journalists working in newspaper and electronic media organizations across Pakistan. The research design used was a 'convergent parallel mixed method' with a pragmatic worldview. Overall, a sample of 200 media persons from both genders was collected for the study.

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### BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Pakistani media is passing through a transitional stage, encountering several hardships. A new era of advancement started in Pakistani media after the advent of the Pakistan Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) in 2002, a government-owned regulatory body that started issuing electronic media licenses to

the private sector, encouraging healthy competition in the sector. But, the rapid growth and cross-media ownership were exploited by financially and politically influenced people who started considering it a profit-based opportunity, an entity to get own interest, pressurize media owners, establish political influence, and find a way out for tax exemption (Posetti & Storm, 2018). This power and money game of media owners is the core potential of media houses, i.e. media employees and workforce (AlAashry, 2020). The data of PEMRA revealed that currently, more than 100 satellite-licensed electronic media channels are operating in the country (Pakistan, 2020), while the Audit Bureau of Pakistan (ABC), which keeps records of print media circulation in Pakistan reported 707 functional newspapers and periodicals countrywide (Appiah et al., 2020). Like other developing regions, media is a core domain of all activities which apprise the nation of the latest developments, including report day to day incidents, economic activity, political and social engagements, and diplomatic movements (Jeljali et al., 2018). Media is considered the voice of a nation that is responsible for raising voices against challenges and hurdles of every department, instead of government, semi-government or private sector. Still, it needs a platform to raise its voice for its rights. The working environment in media houses lacks basic facilities like proper sitting arrangements, appropriate lighting at news desks, long working hours without breaks, the pressure of covering back-to-back assignments and meeting deadlines for filing stories, noise pollution, organizational, social and political pressure and create a good story despite all these constraints. Moreover, there is no job security in media organizations, on-time salaries, sick and paid leaves, training opportunities to teach new skills, or any incentives for progress.

All these factors contribute to psychological stress, which as a result, affects the physical and mental well-being of media employees (Syahputra & Ritonga, 2019). The problems aggravate when it comes to the issues of female journalists. The findings of Kringen (2014) state that female staff of media organizations mostly complained about meagre salaries as compared to males colleagues in their office having the same grade or position, no pick-and-drop facility for late hours, lack of opportunities, promotions, training and judged by their outlook not by their capability. Women journalists also complained of no time for family and their children due to hectic media routines, adding, no concept of paid maternity leaves in media houses. Harassment from inside and outside the office is a major issue for women no use in lodging any complaints as the male hierarchy uses it against them. (Franks, 2013) argued that "women are threatened by the editors and in the field as well". In short, they face gender discrimination, besides harassment and exploitation in salary packages compared to their male colleagues". Due to this reason, the male and female ratio in the Pakistani newsroom is 5:1, and influential positions in the newsroom are generally male-dominated. Overall lack of basic and essential facilities for media employees leads to several issues, including several health problems, particularly headaches, distraction, frustration, anxiety, stress, etc. Unfortunately, most of these frequent concerns of media employees were left unheard, and no heed has been paid to them, which generally escalates with time (Gibson et al., 2016). Journalism is considered not bound to follow gender boundaries and is free from male and female dichotomy. Gender is a category of

social stratification in society, built upon connotations connected to individual roles that signify a hierarchy of power. The patriarchal relations in a society where men have more power intensified 'unequal gender relations'. Societal structures of 'masculinity' are deep-rooted in the journalistic career, where masculinity is bestowed additional weight compared to femininity, so journalism is perceived as a career for men as it encourages masculinity. A newsroom is a reactionary place in which journalists struggle for 'space, power and control', symbolized through competition over the story and certain desks (beats) (Kumari, 2019). These practices in the newsrooms and allocation of assignments depict work division based upon gender role allocations and stereotypes that flourish in society. Considering the great change people are undergoing in Pakistani society, it seems necessary to explore women's role performance on a cross-sectional cultural level.

Thus, in the current study, we examined the working conditions faced by journalists in Pakistan and the working conditions for them. We used Structural Equation Modelling to assess the structural model further. Further, we have discussed the results and made recommendations accordingly.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This study spotlights those points that must be addressed to combat the challenges of media persons, particularly in underdeveloped countries. The media industry in a developing country needs to catch up in the use of technology and the latest trends followed by advanced countries which help to nurture the capabilities of their employees besides the overall prosperity of the organization and media industry.

This study targets three primary constructs

1. Practices and Policies
2. Occupation Safety
3. Perks and Privileges

### ***Practices and Policies***

The practices and policies of media organizations affect employees in various ways, including

1. Nature of Work
2. Working Conditions
3. Hiring and Termination
4. Policies of Organization

### **Nature of Work**

Appiah and their colleagues (Appiah et al., 2020) described work requirements or job nature as imperative components of any specific task enabling the employees to enhance their skills, improve capabilities and get work satisfaction by positively contributing to organizational development. Borger and their colleagues (Borger et al., 2016) describe the notion as accomplishing any assignment that helps employees grow professionally, nurtures professional skills, and opens new avenues for their prosperity. On the other hand, the capability and ability of employees will decrease in organizations where working standards are not maintained, or the working atmosphere has a risk factor. Improper or misuse resources

and technology is another challenge that negatively affects employees' performance compared to organizations maintaining quality work standards (Syahputra & Ritonga, 2019). The capability and ability of employees will decrease in organizations where working standards are not maintained, or the working atmosphere has a risk factor. Improper or misuse of technology is another major risk factor that adversely affects the performance of employees in comparison with organizations maintaining quality work standards. (Epe et al., 2018). Excessive or long working hours are considered more than 48 hours a week, which is common in the media industry, where employees generally work 12 to 15 hours per day.

### **Working Conditions of Workers.**

Working conditions are the work environment and terms and conditions offered to employees of any organization to nurture their abilities and give the maximum of their potential (Bielik & Višňovský, 2021). To better understand the concept of good working conditions, it is imperative to explain who workers are, what is meant by performance, and which factors are imperative for job satisfaction. Workers are a bunch of people working on the same task at the same place, collaborating to accomplish organizational targets and taking economic and social privileges in return for their household. A good office environment includes productive working activities, skills of employees and employability of the workers, assurance of their health, Safety for their well-being and working time, and balance of work with life. According to a study by Bins (Binns, 2017), uncomfortable working conditions are also a root cause of low productivity and adversely affect employees' efficiency.

### **Hiring and Termination Rules**

According to Golan and Mishol-Shauli (Golan & Mishol-Shauli, 2020), workplaces are responsible for ensuring equal opportunities for all, avoiding any disparity among employees on basis of gender for any post. Howe (2013) same procedure will be applied in any institution for hiring employees to combat any prejudice at the time of staff selection, purely following the criteria of capability, skills, and talent. In comparison, no one cannot lose his job or be terminated from work without any authentic reason concerned with ill performance, negligence, or misconduct with employers or co-workers following a set procedure fulfilling all requirements.

### **Policies of the Organization**

Low-skilled, uneducated, or helping staff's efficiency and dedication improves, multiplying the business ratio for owners. An organization facing the restrictions of low skilled workforce who cannot perform a complex task can enhance their productivity by encouraging a collaborative and participatory work environment. (Ferreira, 2018). Placing employees with their own opinion also have positive results on the performance of employees. If changes are made according to their suggestions, it also lifts the performance graph of employees. Research advocates that incentive-based work, offering promotions, and revising job assignment based on performance also nurtures healthy competition among employees, which not only have a direct effect on employees' efficiency but also boost their confidence, commitment, and job satisfaction standard through raising their dignity level which ultimately escalates productivity

(Winarnita et al., 2022). According to Brewer & Clippard (2002), supervisors have influential powers to organize and manage the activities and performance of other staff members at the workplace. In simple terms, better production or better results is directly associated with better input from workers who rely on their urge to perform better, utilizing minimum resources and giving maximum results in the least possible time (Sirota & Klein, 2013).

### ***Occupational Safety***

1. Indoor Environment
2. Risk Factor
3. Health Issues
4. Satisfaction Level

### ***Indoor Office Environment***

A study conducted by Nwanne (Nwanne, 2016) proposed improper office environment results in a "failed setup", which means unfavourable working conditions or an uncondusive workplace atmosphere reduces employees' performance which is labelled as failed or collapsed setup. Such office environments include easily accessible office setups providing adequate occupational safety measures for their Safety and security. Health practitioners are also urged to adopt applicable health precautions to avoid any short-term or long-term physical or psychological risks among employees. (Hess & Gutsche, 2022).

### ***Risk Factor***

The results of the study by Allern and Pollack (Allern & Pollack, 2019) highlighted that risky or unhealthy work environments and the ratio of accidents determine the safety level of the work environment, which is directly proportionate with the productivity of staff. They find out that employees' ignorance about safety measures and improper availability of health precautions at the workplace have adverse consequences on employees' commitment, dedication, and affiliation with the institution.

### ***Health Issues***

(Borger et al., 2016) argued that the rapid use of technology and the latest techniques, besides eco-friendly trends in media, needs the attention of media owners and managers to take concrete steps for the well-being of their employees. Latest advancement leads to emerging psychological issues and physical and social constraints for staff members of media organizations to fulfil requirements of in-depth investigative reporting and objectivity and grab a slot in the era of social media by filing stories in the least possible time. Studies explored that media employees long hours without breaks and repeatedly reported traumatic incidents. It creates psychological pressure to pose themselves as a 'Masculine' personality and ultimately leaves them in isolation and insecurity, which disastrously affects their health and well-being.

### ***Satisfaction Level.***

According to Appiah and their colleagues (Appiah et al., 2020), satisfaction at the workplace means the respect, sense of responsibility, and commitment anyone gets from his job. Workers feel content with their pay if other facilities are ensured and taken care of, and they feel comfortable with their work and

productivity. Much work has been done on the working environment, which is directly interlinked with the health and efficiency of employees in different fields. For a healthy environment, many factors should be considered important for the well-being of staff workers, including their comfort, physical and mental health, etc. The scope of working conditions in media organizations is quite wide. It encompasses various disciplines, including toxicology and epidemiology, appropriate furniture for working, required equipment, physical and mental relaxation, and a secure and conducive environment where anyone can excel with dignity and respect (Flores, 2013). It is comprised of a safe and easily accessible office building having all required safety equipment to minimize accident ratio or injury toll. (Chang, 2010) argued that a proper setup leads to "set up to fail" means employees need the proper resources to perform their work conveniently and show improved performance, also known as the failure of setup. It is not just allocating the right amount of space to everyone but a workplace where they can easily concentrate their task thoroughly besides common areas specifically designed for better collaboration among employers, administrators, and employees. According to (DušanićGačić & Jovanović, 2017), work duration, a conducive environment, healthy workplace have a clear influence on their performance. Previous studies highlighted factors like the Nature of Work, office environment, working hours, hiring and termination rules, pay structure, safety measures at the workplace, medical facilities, family benefits, promotions and supervision, and policies.

### ***Perks and Privileges***

1. Pay and Reward
2. Medical Benefits
3. Equal Opportunities
4. Future Considerations

### **Pay and Reward.**

In the words of (Campbell, 2022), pay structure and benefits offered besides money are the core motivation of media employees, which leads them to retain or switch their job accordingly. (Šimunjak & Menke, 2022) stated that there is a dire impact of pay on the motivation level of employees. In the views of Tangian, (2009), contingent rewards or appreciation of employees to acknowledge their hard work enhances their commitment, hard work, and efficiency. The acknowledgement of good services may be conferred upon employees delivering outstanding performance regularly or accomplishing any specific job. It can be given in the form of financial benefit, recommendation or appreciation level, authority, or any special task which boosts the morale of employees besides a sense of respect and honor staff and take decisions or placing them at a superior place. This act with extra allowances motivates employees to strive hard and put extra effort into their work.

### **Medical Benefits.**

Medical facilities are a basic requirement of employees of any organization. Boyles and Meyer(Boyles & Meyer, 2018) proposed that medical facilities and incentives for employees' family well-being are

major concerns of competent and efficient media employees before joining any job offer. According to (Wahl-Jorgensen & Pantti, 2021), staff output is highly linked to the medical and welfare benefits offered by the office. It has multi-dimensional effects on employees while selecting a job and remaining connected with that Organization. This study underlines that, like previous research, the productivity and creativity of media employees depend upon the working conditions of media organizations. The motivation and productivity of media organizations observing good working standards are much better than those where such standards need to be appropriately followed.

### **Equal Opportunities**

Every media organization must provide equal opportunities to men and women to be appointed at any job according to their qualifications and capability. Equal opportunities are also imperative for career advancement, promotions, incentives, and professional growth without discrimination because unequal opportunities negatively influence employees' output individually and collectively. The disparity in human resources protocols like pay and rewards, perks and privileges, capacity building, career growth, training, and exposure opportunities. Furthermore, elements of sexual or racial harassment contribute to deteriorating chances of performance improvement. (Pe'rotin and Robinson 2000). Equal participation in decision-making and encouragement based on performance also boost productivity.

### **Future Consideration**

According to Posetti and Storm, staff productivity ratio and work output are highly linked with the medical and welfare benefits offered by the office. It has multi-dimensional effects on employees (Posetti & Storm, 2018). The research of (Mazouz et al., 2019a) suggested budding youth from the age group of 21-30 idealize journalism as their dream career based on their strength, energy level, and commitment to work long hours without a break with less time for rest or adequate sleep duration. But with time, after a few years, this routine results in employees' deteriorating physical and professional health. At that time, they start switching jobs or, in some cases, professions, especially to balance their family life. Media organizations have undergone rapid change in Pakistan during the last two decades. The significant growth of employment in the media sector and the long shift hours of workers associated with media organizations have produced evident consequences for the media industry's business.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### ***Motivation Theories***

Motivation is the main driving force that leads employees to give their best performance and contribute to achieving organizational targets with commitment and dedication. Lack of motivation among employees results in dissatisfaction, anxiety, a high-stress ratio, and lack of retention, which can lead the Organization toward downfall and disaster (Burton, 2017). Organizations enhance the motivation of employees by giving value to their financial, social, and family needs. This study applied motivational theories to evaluate the output of employees individually and organizations collectively. Motivation theories are important for understanding how to motivate employees effectively. They provide insight

into what drives people to perform well and how to create a work environment that fosters engagement and productivity (Velmurugan & Sankar, 2017). Some of the most well-known motivation theories include Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, which states that people are motivated to fulfil basic needs before moving on to higher-level needs, and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which suggests that people are motivated by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Other theories, such as Self-Determination theory and goal-setting theory, also help to understand employee motivation. Understanding and applying these theories can help managers and organizations create a positive and productive work environment, leading to increased employee satisfaction and retention (Cohen & Manion, 2017). Thus, motivation theories are sub-fractioned (Chiat & Panatik, 2019) into two categories.

1. Content Theories
2. Process and Performance Theories.

### **Content Theories**

Process theories of motivation focus on the cognitive and behavioral processes that drive human behavior. They attempt to explain how people make decisions and take action to achieve their goals (Dernbach & Illg, 2020). One of the most well-known process theories is Expectancy Theory, which suggests that people are motivated to engage in behaviors that they believe will lead to desired outcomes. According to Expectancy Theory, people will be motivated to perform a task if they believe that their effort will lead to high performance and that high performance will lead to desired outcomes (Park & Kim, 2017). Performance theories of motivation focus on enhancing employee performance by aligning the employee's goals and objectives with those of the Organization. One of the most well-known performance theories is the Self-Efficacy theory, which emphasizes that people's beliefs in their ability to perform a specific task effectively will influence their motivation and performance.

In summary, process theories of motivation focus on the cognitive and behavioral processes that drive human behavior (Nimri, 2017). In contrast, performance theories focus on enhancing employee performance by aligning the employee's goals and objectives with those of the Organization. Understanding and applying these theories can help managers and organizations create a positive and productive work environment, leading to increased employee satisfaction and retention. Content theories mainly scrutinize employees' demands and requirements at the workplace and the elements leading them toward the desired level of satisfaction (Lee, 2018). The content theory of motivation is a psychological theory that focuses on the needs or desires that drive human behavior. It suggests that people are motivated to satisfy specific needs and that different needs drive different behaviors. The most well-known content theory of motivation is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, which proposes that people have five basic needs: physiological, Safety, belongingness and love, esteem, and self-actualization. According to Maslow, people must satisfy their lower-level needs before they can focus on satisfying their higher-level needs (Suciu et al., 2013).

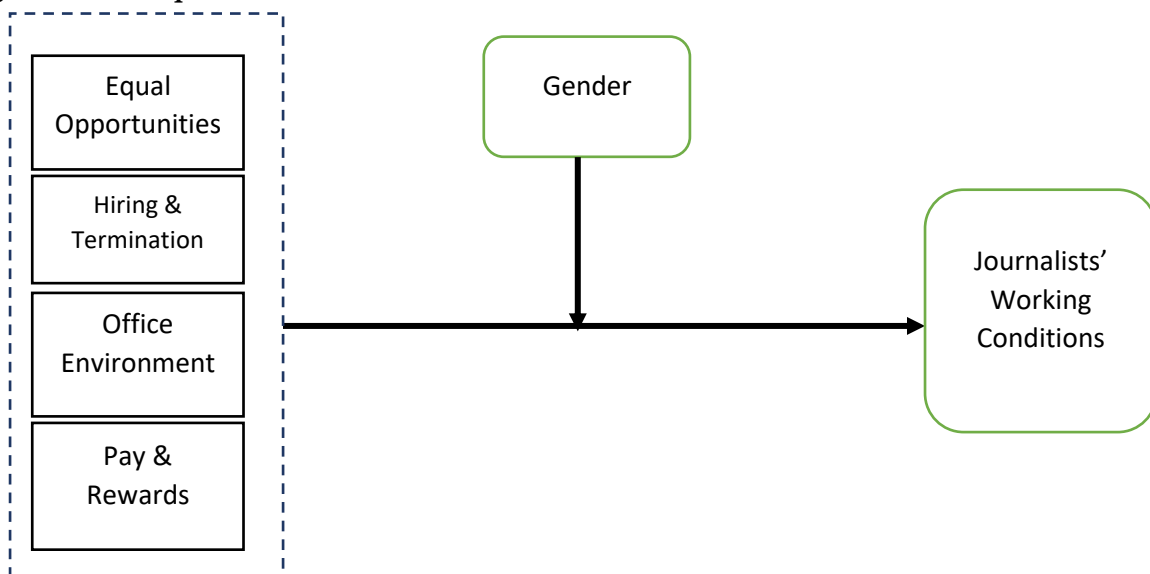


***Process and Performance Theories***

These theories elaborate on an individual's behaviour's frustration level, interests, and endeavours. Higher effort leads to higher productivity, while less effort results in low productivity. Collectively motivation theories analyze the response of employees to attain a satisfaction level from their job by accomplishing their targeted needs. These concepts advocate that media owners should be well aware of their staff grievances and possible way to get rid of them. These concepts also evaluate cognitive process functioning at the back of their conduct and attitude (Kashyap et al., 2020). These concepts also support that media workers do not tolerate unequal or discriminatory actions in the workplace. Suppose their efforts are considered positive and valued by managers in the form of rewards. In that case, they increase their effort to improve productivity, but the results are only positive if they get an appropriate response (Simons et al., 2017). Thus, in light of the cited literature and theoretical frameworks, this study is focused on the following four hypotheses:

- H<sub>1</sub>. Equal opportunities have significant positive effects on journalists’ working conditions.
- H<sub>2</sub>. The hiring and Termination policy has significant positive effects on journalists' working conditions.
- H<sub>3</sub>. Office Environment has significant positive effects on journalists’ working conditions.
- H<sub>4</sub>. Pay and rewards have significant positive effects on journalists’ working conditions.

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**



**RESEARCH METHODS**

This study was based on a cross-sectional design, and the researchers employed surveys for data-gathering purposes (Z. Ali & Bhaskar, 2016). In this regard, a questionnaire-based survey was constructed for the study engaging male and female media employees of print, electronica, and broadcast media of Pakistan. Google Forms was selected for creating an online questionnaire, and the link was circulated to participants through social media and email (Auverset & Billings, 2016). The purposes sampling technique was followed to get quick and more responses. The criteria for participation in the survey were specified in the questionnaire instructions.

### ***Ethical Consideration***

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was attained for the current study, and the study respondents were also provided with informed consent. The study respondents were also briefed about the purposes of the research, its aims, and finally, the importance of results. The researchers also ensured the respondents that their personal information would be kept confidential and would not be used for any commercial purposes (Hosami et al., 2019). The respondents also informed the respondents that their participants would be purely voluntary and not be given any financial remuneration. Finally, the respondents were informed they could quit responding anytime they wanted without further obligation.

### ***Study Population and Sampling***

The population of current research involves journalists currently working across Pakistan. The recent statistics indicate that there are n= 3000 registered journalists by the National Press Club Pakistan as the main journalists' organization in Pakistan (National Press Club Pakistan, 2023). Further, the researchers narrowed down a sample of n= 200 journalists; however, there was no further consideration regarding sample selection (gender, age, city etc.). Notably, this study involves Structural Equation Modelling. The researchers applied Partial least Square-Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to analyze the obtained data (Novak et al., 2021). Thus, the sample size selection was based on the basic requirements of the SEM. As noted by Pasha and their colleagues, the studies based on the Structural Equation modelling should contain a minimum sample size of n= 200 to ensure the reliability of the obtained data (Pasha et al., 2021). The data was collected from September 2022 to December 2022 with the response rate at 100%, as all the survey questionnaires were appropriately filled and returned by the respondents.

### ***Common Method Bias***

The researchers examined the common method bias (CMB). According to MacKenzie & Podsakoff (MacKenzie & Podsakoff, 2012), common method bias is an important analysis to determine whether a proposed relationship is inflated between study variables. In simple terms, Common Method Bias (CMB) causes a systematic covariation above the actual relations between the study variables (Chin, 2012). Thus, common method bias is also assessed in this study, and it found the total of CMB at 21%, which is lower than the threshold value of 50.0%. Thus, the common method bias is assumed to be under control in the current study.

## **RESULTS**

The researchers first examined the validity and reliability of the measurement model by conducting the convergent validity analysis. Notably, the relevant analysis aimed to examine the extent to which the measurement items are internally consistent (Kennedy et al., 2019). First, factor loadings and Average Variance Extracted values were calculated. The obtained value indicated that they surpassed the alpha value of .5 (S. Ali et al., 2021). Further, Cronbach alpha and composite reliability analyses were conducted. Results revealed values from both calculations exceed the threshold value of .7 (Habes et al., 2023). Overall, the results remained supportive, indicating that the convergent validity is established. See

**Table 1 for the details of the convergent validity analysis.**

Variables	Items	Loads	AVE	CA	CR
Equal Opportunities	EQL1	.798	0.806	0.738	0.783
	EQL2	.711			
	EQL3	.839			
	EQL4	.765			
	EQL5	.816			
Hiring and Termination	HNT1	.878	0.802	0.795	0.814
	HNT2	.778			
	HNT3	.750			
Office Environment	ENV1	.871	0.859	0.822	0.882
	ENV2	.864			
	ENV3	.875			
	ENV4	.826			
	ENV5	.747			
Pays and Rewards	PAY1	.848	0.789	0.794	0.761
	PAY2	.899			
	PAY3	.875			
	PAY4	.846			
	PAY5	.715			
	PAY6	.790			
	EQL1	.798			
Working Conditions	EQL2	.711	0.782	0.783	0.901
	EQL3	.839			
	EQL4	.765			

Table 1 Convergent Validity of Measurement Model

**Discriminant Validity**

According to Pasha et al (Pasha et al., 2021), discriminant validity is examined to check the extent to which the study constructs are independent. Table 2 shows the square values of the Fornel-Larcker criterion that are not only exceeding the correlation values but also indicate no correlation with each other. Further, calculating the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlation (HTMT) showed the HTM value of .021, lower than the alpha value of .85 (Kennedy et al., 2019), indicating that the discriminate validity is established in this research.

**Table 2: Pearson Correlation Analysis**

	Equal Opportunities	Hiring and Termination	Office Environment	Pay and Rewards	Working Conditions
<b>Equal Opportunities</b>	0.649				
<b>Hiring and Termination</b>	0.591	0.643			
<b>Office Environment</b>	0.563	0.607	0.737		
<b>Pay and Rewards</b>	0.459	0.447	0.69	0.622	
<b>Working Conditions</b>	0.560	0.127	0.656	0.561	0.611

***Structural Model***

The impact of gender on the association among the perks and privileges, organizational policies and practices, and working conditions and Safety was evaluated through the structural model in PLS-SEM.

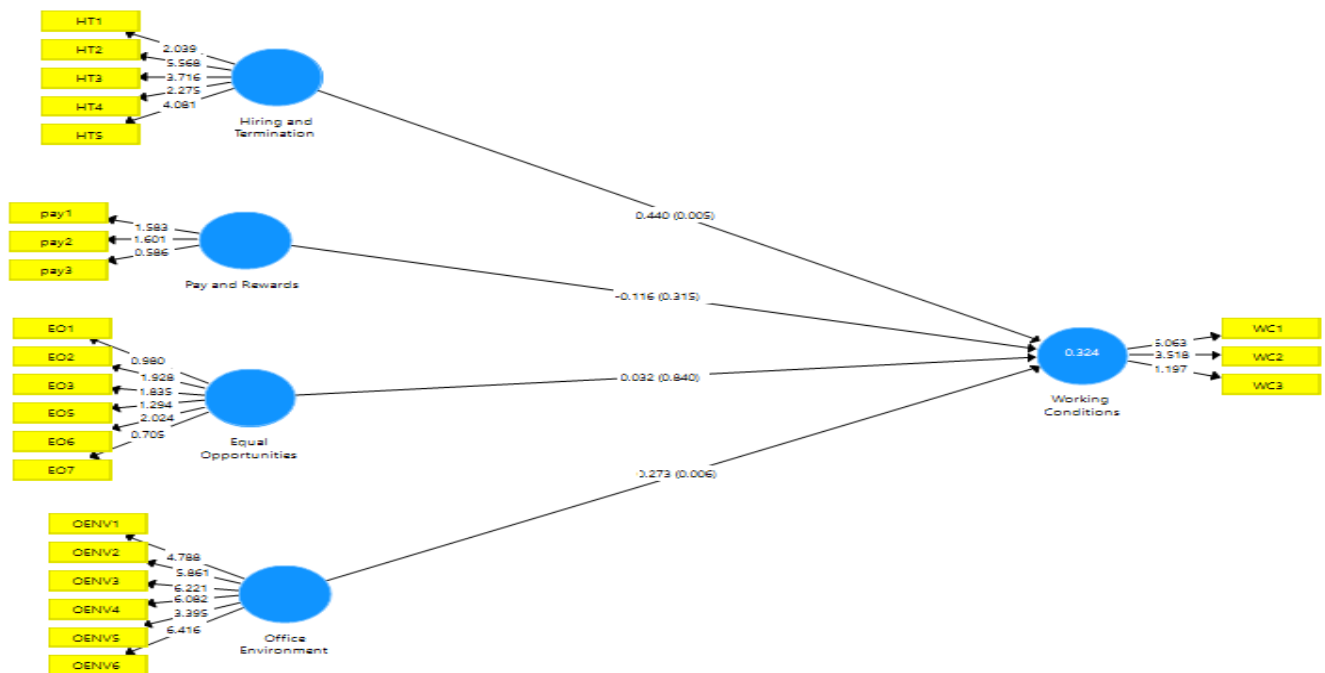
***The model I for Females***

The Table 3 presents the effects of equal opportunities, hiring and termination policy, pay and rewards, and office environment on female journalists' working conditions. The results found that equal opportunities, pay, and rewards have no significant effect on female journalists' working conditions (Mazouz et al., 2019b). However, the hiring and termination policy and office environment significantly influence female journalists' working conditions. The adjusted coefficient of determination,  $R^2$ , for female journalists' working conditions is 0.324, indicating that equal opportunities, hiring and Termination policy, pay and rewards, and office environment explain 32 percent of the variation in female journalists' working conditions.

**Table 3: Path Coefficients for Female Journalists' Working Conditions**

Paths	B	t-value	Sign
Equal Opportunities -> Working Conditions	0.032	0.202	0.84
Hiring and Termination -> Working Conditions	0.44	2.829	0.005
Office Environment -> Working Conditions	0.273	2.737	0.006
Pay and Rewards -> Working Conditions	-0.116	1.004	0.315

Figure 2: Path Model for Females



***Effect Size (f<sup>2</sup>)***

The effect size,  $f^2$ , presents the magnitude of the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable. Lin and their colleagues (Lin et al., 2016) suggested standardized values of effect size, such as small ( $f^2 \geq 0.02$ ), medium ( $f^2 \geq 0.15$ ), and large ( $f^2 \geq 0.35$ ). This study's effect size results are reported below. The Table 4 shows that hiring a termination policy has a medium effect (0.156) on female journalists' working conditions, and the office environment has a low effect (0.081). However, equal opportunities, pay, and rewards have a low effect on female journalists' working conditions.

Table 4: Effect Size (f<sup>2</sup>) for Endogenous Variables

Variables	f <sup>2</sup>
Equal Opportunities	0.001
Hiring and Termination	0.156
Office Environment	0.081
Pay and Rewards	0.014

**Model II for Males**

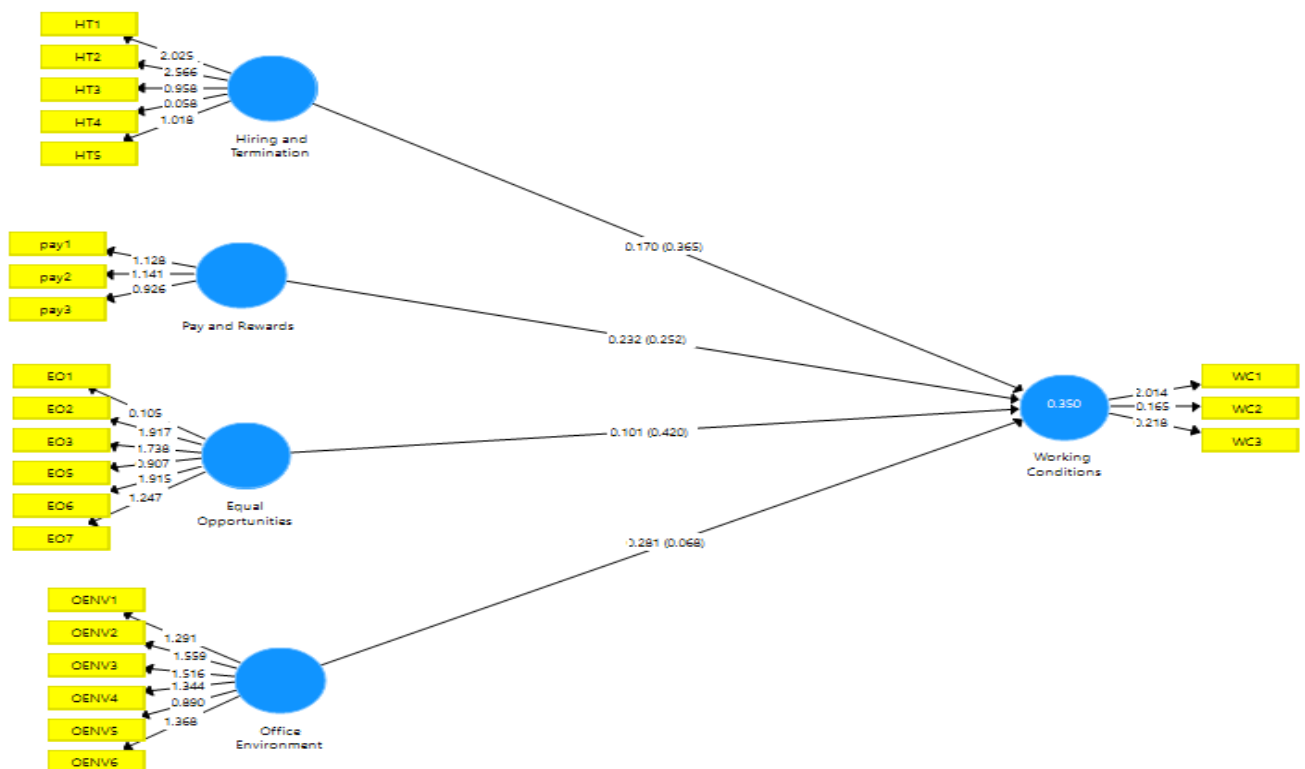
The Table 5 presents the effects of equal opportunities, hiring and termination policy, pay and rewards, and office environment on male journalists’ working conditions. The results found no significant effect of equal opportunities, hiring and termination policy, pay and rewards, and office environment on male journalists’ working conditions (Kircaburun et al., 2020).

The adjusted coefficient of determination, R<sup>2</sup>, for female journalists' working conditions is 0.350, indicating that equal opportunities, hiring and Termination policy, pay and rewards, and office environment explain 35 percent of the variation in female journalists' working conditions.

Table 5: Path Coefficients for Male Journalists' Working Conditions

Paths	B	SE	t-Value	P Values
Equal Opportunities -> Working Conditions	0.101	0.126	0.807	0.420
Hiring and Termination -> Working Conditions	0.170	0.187	0.906	0.365
Office Environment -> Working Conditions	0.281	0.154	1.828	0.068
Pay and Rewards -> Working Conditions	0.232	0.202	1.145	0.252

Figure 3: Path Model for Males



**Effect Size (f<sup>2</sup>)**

The effect size, f<sup>2</sup>, and results for males are reported below. The Table shows that equal opportunities have a small effect on male journalists' working conditions. However, hiring and termination policy, office environment, and pay and rewards mediumly affect male journalists' working conditions.

**Table 6: Effect Size (f<sup>2</sup>) for Endogenous Variable**

Variables	f <sup>2</sup>
<b>Equal Opportunities</b>	0.012
<b>Hiring and Termination</b>	0.03
<b>Office Environment</b>	0.078
<b>Pay and Rewards</b>	0.066

***Moderation Effect***

The moderating role/effect of gender on the relationships between equal opportunities, hiring and termination policy, pay and rewards, and office environment and journalists' working conditions was statistically analyzed (Anwar Pasha et al., 2021). According to Bielik & Višňovský, multigroup analysis determines the path co-efficients between sub-samples as moderating effect. The relevant analysis is considered as a parametric technique to differences between path estimators to test their significance by using t-test (Bielik & Višňovský, 2021).

**Table 7: Moderating Effect of Gender**

Paths	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>
<b>Equal Opportunities -&gt; Working Conditions</b>	0.069	0.373	0.746
<b>Hiring and Termination -&gt; Working Conditions</b>	-0.27	0.864	0.271
<b>Office Environment -&gt; Working Conditions</b>	0.008	0.461	0.922
<b>Pay and Rewards -&gt; Working Conditions</b>	0.347	0.081	0.161

The above table results indicate that gender doesn't significantly moderate the relationship between equal opportunities, hiring and termination policy, pay and rewards, and office environment and journalists' working conditions.

**DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

Media is an ambitious and stringent field. The structure of a journalistic job is the prompt and quick response to meeting deadlines (Tiede, 2019). Media organizations can only perform better if the employees are satisfied and give their best. The media industry is based on creative work, which needs peace of mind, a healthy working environment, a competent workforce, cooperative management, and friendly policies of the Organization and government. Unfortunately, the study results unveiled that employees working in media organizations in Pakistan need to be provided with adequate facilities to work comfortably (Laor, 2022).

Consequently, they do not give the maximum of their potential to the respective Organization. Ultimately, Pakistani media houses' work environment needs to catch up to international standards, particularly in advanced countries (Broussard, 2020). Motivational theories also advocate that employees' problems should be prioritized for better results (Thorsen, 2019). Motivation theories are divided into two segments, content and performance theories, which elaborate that for better performance, employees' output can be enhanced by addressing their needs, encouraging healthy competition, better supervision, and valuing their self-respect. These theories analyzed the response of employees to achieve satisfaction level from their job by accomplishing assigned basic targets (Hess & Gutsche, 2022). These concepts revolve around the notion that media owners are responsible for being well-informed about the challenges of their staff and the strategies to tackle them amicably.

**Table 7(a) Descriptives of The Gathered Responses**

Variables	Items	M	SD	Min	Max
Equal Opportunities	EQL1	3.95	1.074	1	5
	EQL2	3.63	1.078	1	5
	EQL3	3.68	.885	1	5
	EQL4	3.75	1.075	1	5
	EQL5	3.90	.853	1	5
Hiring and Termination	HNT1	4.18	.987	1	5
	HNT2	3.66	1.088	1	5
	HNT3	3.80	.835	1	5
Office Environment	ENV1	4.10	.957	1	5
	ENV2	3.65	.998	0	5
	ENV3	3.90	1.115	0	5
	ENV4	4.00	1.128	0	5
	ENV5	3.78	.875	0	5

This study concludes that women journalists face discrimination in the professional field. Less interaction and limited mobility are the main hurdles in their career growth (Endres, 2017). Women journalists perform double duties at work and home and are supposed to maintain a balance. The possible way for women journalists to get a good position and excel in the profession is to sacrifice domestic life and opt for a bachelor's life to meet the demands of journalism (Posetti & Storm, 2018). It is concluded that journalism can be viewed as strengthening its rationality on gendering in terms of practices (Winarnita et al., 2022). Women journalists bagged slots in the profession through their performance and capability. Undoubtedly, the technological advancement in the field of journalism and the revolutionary approach played a major role in changing the global scenario. Women broke the stereotype concepts and nailed their roots in the profession. But still, gender-based segregation is prominently visible in the field of journalism. Besides several female journalists, this discrimination is quite dominant in beats allocation. The beats linked to the issues of power, finance, diplomatic engagements, and developments are generally considered a domain of male journalists (Simons et al., 2017).

While the other beats linked to human miseries, exhibitions, and showbiz fall into the domain of women journalists (Tahat et al., 2020). Studies suggest that the division of beats is decided at the managerial and director level in media houses which are mainly occupied by male journalists keeping in view gender similarity while taking decisions. The research examines that besides biased behavior, women journalists work dedicatedly and put extra effort to prove their worth identical to their male colleagues. But despite all these hardships, the factors for women's retention in the profession are lack of fundamental requirements at the workplace, pay disparity, and job security (Kotisova, 2020).

**Table 7(b) Descriptives of The Gathered Responses**

Variables	Items	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Pays and Rewards	PAY1	4.08	1.017	0	5
	PAY2	4.08	1.044	0	5
	PAY3	4.05	1.086	0	6
	PAY4	3.6181	.92380	1.00	5.00
	PAY5	3.7286	1.01838	1.00	5.00
	PAY6	3.7286	1.07155	1.00	5.00
	EQL1	4.08	1.017	0	5
Working Conditions	EQL2	4.08	1.044	0	5
	EQL3	4.05	1.086	0	6
	EQL4	3.6181	.92380	1.00	5.00

**Study Limitations:**

The researcher has faced difficulties approaching media employees to overcome time constraints. Resultantly the participants were approached through electronic channels of email and what’s app. The responses of non-journalists were less than the journalists' as they do not use smartphones and technology, and due to the lockdown, it was not possible to approach them personally. Another area for improvement was the language problem. The questionnaire was designed in English, so employees of Urdu newspapers or those with less education level were reluctant to submit their responses. Sampling techniques also create problems in generalizing the results overall population and figuring out problems faced by media employees in Pakistan at their workplace.

**Areas for Further Research**

The study points out that there is a need to work exclusively on the occupational Safety of employees in the media organization of Pakistan. A comparative study on the working of media employees in Urdu and English media organizations will also be significant for future researchers. A study on the post-COVID-19 scenario of working conditions of media employees is also an interesting research area. Issues of employees working in private media organizations are more serious than those working in state-run media organizations, which is another area to be explored.

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