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<b>Article:</b>	<b>Women's Career in Media Industry of Pakistan: An Analysis of Patriarchy and Neo-Liberalism</b>
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### **ABSTRACT**

This study was an academic attempt to understand the dynamics of career trajectory of women employed in the mainstream media houses as anchors and journalists. The research method was qualitative, 21 in-depth interviews were conducted of female journalists and 2 focus group discussions were conducted age group (25-60) full time registered employees were selected, research participants were selected from the registered media houses with All Pakistan Newspaper Society Purposive sampling technique was applied to conduct in-depth interviews, two focus group discussions were held. The final results highlighted that negative social capital assigned to 'womanity' in a hard core field job, lack of safe access to public spaces and neo-liberal policies and patriarchal cultural norms adds on to hurdles. This study aims to contribute to further recommendations for policy making, identifying gender gaps and work on sustainable development goal of sustainable gender equality.

**Keywords:** Patriarchy, Neo-liberalism, public space access, glass ceiling, womanity, social capital, habitus

## **Introduction:**

The actors who support to perpetuate the patriarchal values can be both men and women, patriarchy is a structure, in which women are oppressed, exploited and manipulated. This system is beefed up by societal and cultural norms, institutionalized gender biasedness and roles portrayed by media. There are numerous social structures which hold the foundation of power and control system (Sultana, 2012). These differences Patriarchy system is divided into major two domains; Descriptive stereotypes and Prescriptive stereotypes. The descriptive stereotypes state that how women typically act, in the frame of social norms e.g. Women avoid leadership, they let men be agentic. The beliefs about characteristics of women, that they should be soft spoken and subjugating (Reynoldson, 2018).

Prescriptive stereotypes, these stereotypes, narrates which traits, attributes should be acquired on basis of gender. These stereotypes result in devaluation of women's performance as it leads to denial of their performance and not giving credit to them for their success or penalization for being competent. Prescriptive stereotypes are gender based, that's why influences evaluations in work setting. It creates an exclusive Climate: when members working in an organization do not feel equally welcomed, respected and valued. Glass Ceiling, exist for women as a barrier to prevent them from rising to the top of the corporate ladder, the career ladder for women thus also is named as career tree to define the much hurdles.

## **Review of the Literature**

The barriers that women experience in media organization, as they can feel out of place due to non-conventional working hours, travel or on call status. Backlash occurs when women face negative reaction on violating descriptive and prescriptive gender norms. Cosmetic diversity the question of how many versus the status of where. Tape measure case at MIT, Professor Nancy Hopkins needed extra minimum 200 sq. feet in her office for her research on Zebra Fish her request was repeatedly denied she took a tape to measure (tape is now in MIT museum), her junior male professor office size was an average of 1200 sq. feet and her colleague full prof offices were 3000sq feet on average, Prof Nancy office was 1500 sq. feet, it eventually led to a gender equity discussion known as tape measure and the tape is in the museum of MIT(Massachusetts Institute of Technology).

On and off ramp is the leaking pipeline as women taking career breaks due to domestic/social/maternal barriers, it causes a leaking pipe line as the good opportunities for them and a sustainable career path is leaking Placement, power and prestige, the women in media covers soft beat areas, disproportionate representation in management n all. There is an occupational gendered split by networking Gap and lack of corporate hierarchy, due to an existence of gender pay gaps.

The case of Jan Morris he was a sports journalist covered  $\frac{3}{4}$  of Mount Everest, at age of 46 he underwent a gender transform surgery to be a woman. He said "if I was assumed to be incompetent at reversing cars or doing field journalism, oddly I started feeling same". The existence of velvet ghetto in the work habitus for women creates the upper echelons establishes the negative capital in a neo-liberal set-up.

Neo liberal patriarchy was first coined by Prof. Campbell, in which unequal social relations and structure on basis of gender is fueled by the political and economic policies. Neoliberalism through allocation of labor further creates institutionalized gender based hierarchal set ups. Neoliberal policies and patriarchal relations create a certain nexus and

patronize the segregation. The social inequalities between men and women, still exist in the expanded economy. Neoliberal policies have structured gender based hierarchies and promote patriarchal norm (Walby, 1994). Neo liberalism and patriarchy is also said to be defining the new gender regime, this hinders the gender revolution. The unpaid work assigned to women and structural application of exclusive work climate is making the career progress more difficult. Career trajectory: influences In any professional practice, such as media career trajectory begins at the point of career start up, experience, professional growth, regularization of registered payment, framework of employment, external n internal (Winberg, 2014)). Level of segregation has said to be a significant factor in discrepancy and constraints upon careers of women. Segregation explains how gender based separation is created. In horizontal segregation, men and women working in same job category but men occupying more skilled and better paid positions. Vertical segregation entails inequality whereas horizontal produces differences and segregation. Gender segregation in work place is reproduced by dialect between structure and interaction, idea of hegemonic masculinity the socially dominant form of masculinity this gender based practice sets the organizational occupational pattern. Institutional/structural discrimination is perpetuated through promotion and recruitment system, which directly advantage men, resulting in a gendered sub-structure that undervalues the capabilities of women. Withdrawals from the career on temporary basis handicaps the progress, women due to gendered division of role are more occupied with exclusive child care and household burden. This division of responsibility accumulated that women performs less paid work than their male counterpart accumulated less human capital and therefore appears less attractive in labor market. Since women are more committed to the unpaid domestic (Mcquaid, 2009).

In neoliberal capital market organizations are structure to protect male financial power and rewarded masculine attributes accordingly. Far from being an objective economic fact, skill is often an ideological category, imposed on certain types of work by virtue of sex and power who perform and results gender bias in judgement. The way in which there is a 'perceived' lack of fit between stereotypes of women and requirements of job considered to be male in gender type, leads to negative performance expectations (Heilmen, 2001).

These gender based perception give men an advantage over female counterparts regardless of the capabilities of female applicants. Women who attained leadership position achieved this despite having to operate within an environment which is pure 'masculine' in psyche. Man as the Provider and Leader. Most beliefs as hindrance to career progress, are mostly based on communal attributes, as these are linked with subjugation, docile and nurturing, whereas patriarchal structure strongly associated with genetic attributes as self-confident, independent and ambitious. Resilient perceptions towards patriarchal culture is likely to lead to positive career formation path (Hewlett, 2016).

### **Objectives**

The aims and objectives of this study are

- To see career structure of women in media industry;
- To analyze as to how patriarchy influences career structure in media industry;
- To analyze influence of neo liberalism on career structure and career success in media industry;

- To analyze the nexus of neo-liberalism and patriarchy in structure of career of women in media organizations;
- To analyze as to how patriarchy and neo-liberalism hinder or facilitate women's career success in media industry.

### **Significance**

There is a research gap on the converging role of neo-liberalism and patriarchy on the career path of women. There is a research gap in Pakistan on the influence of neo liberalism on basis of gender, also how the supposedly media is considered a male dominating field. The decision making and key positions of power are mostly held the men especially in media industry. The media despite raising objections on gender disparity yet is far from being woman-friendly. Sexualization based and sexist language are rampant, with women-based sexualization of content now added. (Ali, 2016).

- The analysis of power and gender in journalism presented here is there-fore inspired by Bourdieu's theories of gender and the reproduction of social power. The feminist interpretation of Bourdieu's general theories primarily draws on Bourdieu in the book, *What Is a Woman* (Bourdieu, 2001).
- As Bourdieu defines it as a social field, comprising of social settings where individuals and institutions for prestige, status and power. The links between field, power and gender are ongoing. In all fields there is an ongoing struggle for hegemony, the actors require different strategies to acquire position and influence. One must have resources to attain a position, to acquire a capital that is valued in the field. Gender is also considered as part of social field. Gender, too, is a form of symbolic capital, having different value in different fields. Where femininity has negative symbolic value, a woman may compensate for it by acquiring other forms of capital: professional, cultural, economic or social (Braun, 2007).
- Feminist analysis of a field is that journalism – like all other fields – is gendered, but that the meaning and implications of gender vary between different media and over time. – Journalism originated as a male domain, to which women were denied access. The first few European women to engage in the newspaper business were a number of widows of master printers who took over their husbands' businesses and managed their newspapers. Their access to the field was by inheritance, but their position was also founded on a specific idea about gender, namely, that widows were considered more highly developed women. Gender, too, is a form of symbolic capital, having different value in different fields.

Toril Moi on gender narrates “gender never appears in a pure field of its own, it is always a socially variable entity, one which carries different amounts of symbolic capital, different contexts, maleness functions as a positive and femaleness as a negative capital symbolic capital.

### **Research Questions**

- How ‘Womanity’ perceived as a positive or negative capital in media as a work place?
- Is there a relationship between Velvet ghetto, Patriarchy and Neo-liberalism? How these three influence the career progression of women in media industry?

- Is women based sexualization of content and gender disparity exist in media for their female employees?
- Position, prestige, power and the genre are these phenomenon gender biased in media houses as work place?

### Research Methodology

The research applied two qualitative research tools i.e In-depth interview and focus group discussion. Two focus group discussions were held with members of media houses, the focus group discussion comprised of almost 90 minutes each. First one was with women working as field reporters and the other with senior male journalists. This provided a very rich and diverse data to draw comparative and holistic analysis

The in-depth interviews were conducted for at-least 90 minutes or over more than one session, they were kept open ended, contextual and subjective, in-depth interviews are helped in understanding viewpoints, digging in the phenomenon, individual experiences of respondents and the overall struggle in the context of gendered barriers.

The selected media houses selected were mainstream, a purposive sampling technique was used, the criteria for inclusion is full time registered employment and must be working actively at media house.

All the interviews were recorded with the help of a recorder and later transcribed verbatim after conduction of interview. The interviews were translated from Urdu to English language but the colloquial were kept intact. Transcribed and translated transcripts were browsed to identify the codes, expressed in form of ideas, by the study participant. After coding the transcripts, the coded data was categorized by grouping of data that has similar code and themes were identified for data analysis.

### Conceptualization and Operationalization

Patriarchy is a multi-layered and deeply embedded institution of power dynamics to keep the control in society. Patriarchal structures are mainly male dominated with a long history and has existed in almost all societies in the world. This is based not only a cultural element but institutionalized as well both politically and sociologically. These stereotypes are used to exercise control women (Moder, 2019).

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#### Submissive and fragile

Leadership and masculinity both defined as same.

Aggression “manly traits” to compete

#### Unpaid labor is a gender role.

A woman belongs to kitchen, cooking and cleaning gender assigned role.

A working woman is labeled of, is many neglecting her family.

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### Conceptualization of Neo-Liberalism

Neoliberalism is based on a free market principle, where competitiveness and profit maximization operates and creates new forms of subjectivity also further strengthens the misbalance of power as neo-liberal policies are working on survival of the fittest. These policies

are criticized in the discourse of empowerment, role of agency, and freedom of choice from feminist perspective. Neo-liberalism work is latest form of capitalist market working to benefit for the maximum benefit of the capitalist and corporate organization, spending minimum and reaping maximum (Dahlerup, 2018)

### Table Operationalization of Neo-Liberal Values

<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Elements</i>	<i>Statements</i>
Survival of the fittest	Longer work and many a times odd working hours..	Non flexible working time for women's career regression and lack of success.
Networking gap	It leads to anti feminized climate and lesser opportunity of training	In such a climate women are automatically barred from growth opportunities.
Social stereotyping	Pink collar jobs are assigned as for the soft and less important positions women are considered better, e.g. in most talk shows most analyst are men but host is a female	Public relation skill and mainstream opportunities by default feel the women are disadvantage more sexualized and objectified in media houses.

- Resilience represents a set of beliefs to counter the stereo types resulting from internalized patriarchy, as it not only involves positive thinking or inspirational thoughts but career focused mindset too (Thorsen, 2006).
- Advancement of career within paid work domain by resilient beliefs to counter challenges of glass ceilings and patriarchal dominance are associated with positive outlook toward the workplace and the high optimism (Moder, 2019) Long term commitment with career is positively related with higher salary (Ganti, 2014).

Placement of women as a reserved army of workers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social mobility</li> <li>• Identifications</li> <li>• Opportunities</li> <li>• Competitive in the job market</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Neo-Liberalism lens</b></li> <li>• <b>Lack of Social support</b></li> </ul>
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Higher education. Female Role models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pursue Higher Education</li> <li>• Passion For Achievements</li> <li>• A change agent is Father's supporting their daughter's education.</li> </ul>	<b>Resilience</b>  <b>Motivation</b>
The pay gap is universal and wider in traditional societies like Pakistan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Men ranked as primary bread earners</li> </ul>	Vulnerability in financial negotiations

**Themes of Analysis**

<i><b>Codes</b></i>	<i><b>Sub-themes</b></i>	<i><b>Major Themes</b></i>
They are discouraged to start a career in journalism and passion to peruse, it is known to be male dominated professional and the associated external factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discouragement from teachers</li> <li>• Lack of empowerment in decision making</li> <li>• Career trajectory is dependent on the approval of others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Patriarchy</b></li> <li>• <b>Financial Independence</b></li> <li>• <b>Womanity as Capital</b></li> </ul>
Placement of women as a replaceable and reserved army of workers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social mobility</li> <li>• Identifications</li> <li>• Opportunities</li> <li>• Competitive in the job market</li> <li>• Enrolled in mainstream economy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Neo-Liberalism men lens</b></li> <li>• <b>Belongingness</b></li> <li>• <b>Social Instability</b></li> <li>• <b>Lack of Social support</b></li> </ul>
Fathers support for their daughters decisions in career in education. Role models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pursue Higher Education</li> <li>• Choice for University</li> <li>• Financial Support</li> <li>• Passion For Achievements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Motivation</b></li> </ul>
The discouragement in classrooms even by the female teachers for girls to journalism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discouragement on peculiar careers for women</li> <li>• Women culturally not perceived as opinion makers</li> <li>• Many women have to go off the ramp</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demotivation</li> <li>• Cultural barriers</li> <li>• negative stigmas attached</li> </ul>

**Analysis**

Media houses have unconventional work hours. Traditionally labelled 'feminized jobs' like teaching is seen more suitable for women. The genre of Power in an investigative and field based profession has a negative relationship with social capital of womanity as communal roles of women in local culture are mainly as care takers, docile and passive.

The analysis of data derived from the in-depth interviews conducted and focus group discussion infers upon that media industry is still very much considered to be 'men's work' while womanity as a negative capital outside the domesticated zone and soft skills. The study further commence that velvet ghettos are built and there is an existence of 'multi layering of glass ceiling'. the hindrance and inaccessibility to public spaces further adds to multiply the



problems for women in media industry. As in genre of media, the hard beats are politics, war, crime and contains the primary value, female employees are mainly excluded from hard beats.

Salary negotiations and pay gap are another barrier in career advancement, as women are seen and perceived as replaceable employees. The Sexualization and objectification further reduces women to mere objects and less intellect worth, leading to positions of 'lesser decision making power'.

Despite progress in media houses regarding women's status in career trajectory, much still needs to be done. At the middle level of reporting, full time employed women in regular media did not fully perceive the concept of glass ceiling and concept 'velvet ghetto' that many others, their unawareness on their disadvantaged status on a gender-conferred basis (Lee, 2011).

There is a large disparity between the number of women graduating with professional qualifications in media studies, and the number actually working in the media sector, raising the possibility that the sector is particularly unrewarding for women professionals.

The coping mechanism adopted by 'becoming one of the boys' as "women are forced to work long hours to prove themselves a better choice than boys and fight for assignments," 30th October, Sadaf Naeem Pakistani reporter lost her life in a political rally by trying too hard to give a breaking news. Her struggle showed that she had been struggling to prove herself as hard beat reporter in field for thirteen years, still was struggling as women do not have a network in political beat.

Women are still subtly compelled to 'neuter' their 'woman-ness' in a sector Dominated by males, and whose culture is thus predominantly male. This defeminisation and masculinization as already inferred appears to make women tolerant of, rather than vigilant against, sexual harassment and other anti-woman practices in the workplace (Niemi, 2016).

The women who are though few and rare who made it to senior positions in journalism, a certain pattern and trend is identifiable. The mechanism which is built towards patriarchy and control of neo-liberalism on the space, objectification and sexualization of female bodies basically determines the course of trajectory of career progression. To be more accurately rendering, the research respondents from the most higher and powerful positions expressed resilience and a very non resignatory mechanism towards barriers and challenges.

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