

# A Study on the Problems faced by Women Journalists

R. Sasikala<sup>1</sup>, G. Radha<sup>2</sup> and K. Thangaraja<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor (J), Directorate of Extension Education & <sup>3</sup>Ph.D, Scholar,

Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology, TNAU, Coimbatore - 641 003, Tamil Nadu, India

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor and HOD, School of Communication,

Dr. G. R. Damodaran College of Science, Coimbatore - 641 014, Tamil Nadu, India

Email: sasikalar@gmail.com

(Received on 18 February 2013 and accepted on 28 April 2013)

**Abstract** - During the years since World War II, the percentage of women in the work force has increased steadily. In the 1990's the labor force was one-third female. By 2000, the International Labour Organization (ILO) estimated that half of global workers would consist of women. With the advent of 1980's the women's liberation movement gave way to the feminist movement. Women of this time straight way entered, invading the once staunch domain of men in increasingly greater number and in wider areas. Still they are discriminated in terms of their representation in creative and decision making position. There are number of constraints on them. It is due to the male domination in the organization. In order to encourage more women to join the profession, it is necessary to undertake a study to find out problems of women journalists. The sample frame for the present study includes both male and female respondents of various organizations in Chennai. The respondents comprised of editors, sub- editors, reporters, programme executives and free lancers in both print and electronic media. The samples were selected by purposive random sampling technique which was adopted to identify and include eligible respondents in the sample. At the first stage, it was decided to identify and select a convenient number of respondents using purposive sampling technique. The number of respondents and the geographical area chosen for the present study was determined on the basis of an estimate of the resources available to the researcher including availability of women journalist, time and social support needed to complete the investigation. Adhering to the above procedure the data was obtained using the questionnaire from 60 respondents in the complete form. The findings reveal that half of the women journalists admit that their profession often creates turbulence in the family and half of them do not agree with the view and also it shows that women are given

responsibilities in the organizations. Majority of the respondents i.e. both men and women journalists agree that women at work should be given concessions so that they fulfill the family and social obligations. Eighty per cent of male and 70% of the female respondents feel that it is necessary to provide transport facilities for women to and from the work sport. It also shows that women are given important issues like political issue, foreign affairs etc for reporting without any discrimination. It reveals that their capability is recognized and it also shows that the situation has changed in the media.

**Keywords:** Women Journalist, Media, Discrimination

## I. INTRODUCTION

During the years since World War II, the percentage of women in the work force has increased steadily. In the 1990's the labor force was one-third female. By 2000, the International Labour Organization (ILO) estimated that half of global workers would consist of women. As of 2008, the percentage of women in the workforce was 40.5 percent. This does not include the share of work that women do in the home. Even though women make up a large percentage of the workforce and these numbers continue to grow, the jobs are less rewarding, the conditions are worse, and women face more job insecurity and even violence in some countries. Many global female workers are left to work in the service industry, in informal jobs, and in part-time jobs. (Brenna Coleman, Nov 9, 2010).

In the last three decades, tremendous changes have taken place on many fronts. Not least among them are changes on the social front in relation to the role and status of women in the society. Women who have been entering salaried,

remunerative occupations and professions are increasing substantially. Women are working in almost all kinds of jobs like technical, professional and non- professional.

With the advent of 1980's the women's liberation movement gave way to the feminist movement. Women of this time straight way entered, invading the once staunch domain of men in increasingly greater number and in wider areas. This was followed upon women being given more opportunities to obtain an education and upon women being increasingly recruited into their national workforces.

Going through the historical accounts of the press in India, though the women entered the journalistic profession in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, they did not played an important role in designing and reshaping it.

Society is undergoing change. Journalism was considered taboo for the Indian women. However, women journalists are slowly being accepted by the society. After long conscious efforts by activists of women's movements and also due to the influence of the women's decade, the media today is open to women's problems and struggles by giving more space to women problems and also by inviting women to write for special columns.

Still they are discriminated in terms of their representation in creative and decision making position. There are number of constraints on them. It is due to the male domination in the organization. In order to encourage more women to join the profession, it is necessary to undertake a study to find out problems of women journalists.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Female work participation in India is among the lowest in the world. The number of women in the electronic media is dramatically higher than in the print media, averaging 30-40 per cent- a figure that no editorial room of a newspaper can boast of. (Akhileshwari, 1990).

Journalism is no longer an alien field for women. Like all other professions, women have also gained a foothold in the art of communication through writing. There is 50% jump in no. of working women in India over last 6years (Economic Times).

Management talks of joining women in the decision-making process but they allow this sector as totally male dominated (Rama. Jha 1989).

According to the survey released by campaigning group women in journalism it is found that 74% of news journalists in national are men and also men dominate in political and business journalism and it is only 3% of the women in sports journalism. It is clear from the study that women are less likely to be in senior positions. Eight out of the top 10 newspapers having almost twice as many male editors as women editors. That gender divide penetrates the whole newspaper industry with women making up just 30% of all newspaper journalists (Rowenna Davis).

Thai female journalists had become assimilated into the journalistic workforce, in terms of salary, education, working conditions, and that they need no longer be regarded as a separate group. Most of the female journalists have faced some kinds of discrimination such as verbal harassment, prejudice from news sources (Kanyika Shaw).

## III. METHODOLOGY

The sample frame for the present study includes both male and female respondents of various organizations in Chennai. The respondents comprised of editors, sub- editors, reporters, programme executives and free lancers in both print and electronic media.

The samples were selected by purposive random sampling technique which was adopted to identify and include eligible respondents in the sample. At the first stage, it was decided to identify and select a convenient number of respondents using purposive sampling technique. The number of respondents and the geographical area chosen for the present study was determined on the basis of an estimate of the resources available to the researcher including availability of women journalist, time and social support needed to complete the investigation. Adhering to the above procedure the data was obtained using the questionnaire from 60 respondents in the complete form.

**IV. FINDINGS**

TABLE I PROBLEMS TO WOMEN JOURNALISTS

S. No.	Items	Male				Female			
		Agree		Disagree		Agree		Disagree	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	Media profession and its obligation often creates turbulence in the family	16	53.3	14	46.6	15	50	15	50
2	Media job allows less time to be with the family.	25	83.3	5	16.6	19	63.3	11	36.6

From table I it was inferred that women journalists finds it difficult to bear the responsibilities of both career and family. 53.3% of the male respondents and 50% of female have admitted that their profession often creates turbulence in the Family whereas 50% of the female respondents and 46.6% of the male respondents do not agree with this view. So it reveals that media profession creates turbulence in the family.

Majority of the respondents i.e. 83.3% of male and 63.3% of female feel that the media profession allows less time for women with the family. It shows that they are given the major responsibilities by the organization. On the whole it shows that women journalists are considered and given responsibilities in the organizations, hence they find less time to be with their family.

TABLE II CONCESSIONS TO WOMEN JOURNALISTS

Sl. No.	Items	Male				Female			
		Agree		Disagree		Agree		Disagree	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Women at work may be given concessions to fulfill family and social obligations.	23	76.6	7	23.3	20	66.6	10	33.3
2.	It's obligatory on the part of the organization to provide transport facilities for women to and from work spot.	24	80	6	20	21	70	9	30
3.	Women journalists may be given exemption from night shift	19	63.3	11	36.6	13	43.3	17	56.6

From table II it was inferred that majority of the respondents i.e. 76.6% of men and 66.6% of women journalist agree that women at work should be given concessions so that they fulfill the family and social obligations. Eighty per cent of male and 70% of the female respondents feel that it is necessary to provide transport facilities for women to and from the work sport. But 30% of female respondents do not agree with it.

Male respondents 63.3% and 43.3% of the female respondents feel that women journalists may be given exemption from night shift whereas 36.6% of male and 56.6% of the female respondents disagree with this view. From the above table, it is inferred that women journalists feel that concessions like transport facilities and exemption from night shift are not necessary as it is their responsibility to make arrangements.

TABLE III COVERAGE OF AREAS GIVEN TO WOMEN JOURNALISTS

S. No.	Items	Male				Female			
		Agree		Disagree		Agree		disagree	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Very important issues are covered by women journalists equally as they do women's issues.	20	66.6	10	33.3	25	83.3	5	16.6
2.	International news is better covered by men.	12	40	18	60	5	16.6	25	83.3

From table III it was inferred that 66.6% of the male respondents and 83.3% of female respondents agree that very important issues are equally given to women for reporting. 33.3% male respondents and 16.6% of female respondents feel that still there are some loop holes in the media.

Though no areas are supposed to be reserved on the basis of gender, Lifestyle, Arts, Fashion, Education are traditional areas women are pushed into, while Politics, Parliament Coverage, Crime, Sports, Foreign Affairs, Police, Commerce, Business are the traditional areas of work for men. (Status of Women Journalists in India). Now- a- days the situation is slowly changing.

Sixty percent of the male respondents and 83.3% of female respondents do not agree with the statement that international news is better covered by men. It is inferred that even women journalists are good enough to cover international news. But 40% of male respondents reveal that men are better in covering international news. This may be because that man has more contact with the society than women.

The above result shows that women are given important issues like political issue, foreign affairs etc for reporting without any discrimination. It reveals that their efficiency is recognized and important coverage are given for women journalists also.

## V. CONCLUSION

The findings reveal that media profession often creates turbulence in the family and also they find less time to be with their family. . It shows that women journalists are considered and given responsibilities in the organizations, hence they find less time to be with their family. It also shows that concessions like transport facilities and exemption from night shift is not necessary.

Women are given important issues like political issue, foreign affairs etc for reporting without any discrimination. So it reveals that their efficiency is recognized and important coverage's are given for women journalists also.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Akhileshwari, "Should Women Opt for Journalism?" Vidura, Press Institute of India, Jan- Feb 1990.
- [2] "Status of Women journalists in India", Press Institute of India, National commission for women, New Delhi
- [3] Brenna Coleman, "Percentage of Women in the Workforce & Media Portrayal at Odds", Nov 9,2010 downloaded from the www.lycos.com on 22.2.2013
- [4] Rowenna Davis, "Men Still Dominate National Newspaper Journalism" downloaded from www.google.com on 22.5.2013
- [5] Kanyika shaw, "Perceptions of Male and Female Newspaper Journalists in Thailand" downloaded from www.google.com