Chapter 5

Work(place) Realities in Hindi Print Journalism

5.1 Introduction

Women in journalism strive hard to break the glass ceiling in this male-dominated profession. Lack of basic infrastructure and subtle undercurrents of power not only discriminate against women in print journalism but make negotiation a difficult process.

Experiences of gender in workplace is an important issue, Acker (1990) argues, organizations are sites where gender, sexuality, race and class are presumed and also reproduced since workplaces are not gender-neutral structures. This chapter illustrates the unaddressed realities of women journalists’ work and workplace which reproduces gender-stereotypes. Women journalists are tied to certain ‘soft beats’ placing ‘hard beats’ above all, which establishes binary-beat structure of journalists work. This chapter further discusses the gender politics which operates through sexual division of work that suggests a social hierarchy of intellect where women are presumed inferior to men.

Ellen Riordan (2002) has challenged feminist scholars to venture into studies of media economics in order to examine how matters of resources, labour and content are never gender neutral. The chapter contextualizes Hindi print media scene and discusses the nature of the workforce, women as labour, and the politics of rewards and recognition policies in print media. Women’s work and labour is often cheaper than that of men, which has meant an exploitation of women’s labour by paying them less than their male counterparts.

Hartsock (2004) argues that women are seen as reproductive bodies too, and further unlike men, women’s lives are institutionally defined by their production of use-value in the domestic space. This domestic-labour of women’s work has been an ignored aspect which creates surplus value and is a reason for keeping women unavailable to participate fully in the labour market. While understanding women as a worker or labour in
journalism, this section is an effort to unwrap the multiple power realities in print journalism.

This chapter details the recognition and award system, which mostly benefits male-journalists overshadowing the women journalists’ contribution to the profession. Unraveling the politics of recognition and awards in journalism, I trace linkages of state and media that work to exclude women journalists.

Untangling multiple dimension of the profession of journalism, this chapter tackles an important issue of workplace politics and locates women journalists as a biological body too. It reflects how women’s bodies and their function are perceived at workplace. It elaborates the experiences of women in workplace.

5.2 Gender Stereotyping in Construction of Beats: Hard versus Soft Beats

‘Beat’ is the term used in journalism, to describe the subject area which is covered by a journalist and it has been a much-debated issue. The divide between hard beat and soft beats bifurcating hard beats like politics, sports, business, international affairs, crime for men and soft beats like art and culture, fashion, beauty, entertainment for women. van Zoonen (1998) cited in North (2014) writes that many men and arguably some women typically believe that women are better at and perhaps more interested in covering soft news topics.

It is also about making a choice on what women want to report which is often a contested issue for women. In journalism, this choice is mainly about selection of work which is reinforced as the traditional binary of hard beats and soft beats associating hard to masculine and soft to feminine attributes.

Louise North (2014) cites Suzanne Frank’s (2013) recent analysis of the UK media that politics and sport were the two areas where female bylines were least likely to be recorded, followed closely by opinion writing. Similarly case in the United States, where
the Women’s Media Centre (2014, p. 6) after analyzing 27,000 stories across media platforms found that female journalists most often reported on health, lifestyle and education, and were least likely to cover politics or crime.

North (2014) writes that feminist critiques of hard and soft news categorisations have tried to focus on the gendered nature of the dichotomy. She mentions that hard news is at the top of the news hierarchy and considered as important work that men typically do (Poindexter and Harp, 2008; Rakow and Kranich, 1991 cited in North, 2014) whereas soft news is seen as less important and stereotypically what women report. North (2014) quotes Kay Mills (1998, 110) that “the sexual implications fairly leap off the page.” Cited in North (2014) Australian scholar Catharine Lumby (1994, p. 50) also mentions that masculine newsroom vernacular where hard news is high-ranking news and reporters talk about “getting a good story up”. North (2014) states that perhaps, the connection with emotions which are typically seen as feminine traits and attributes marks soft stories or soft news category. This news forms a less significant in the news hierarchy, and female reporters preferred to report on them than males (Cann and Mohr, 2001; Poindexter and Harp, 2008 cited in North, 2014).

Joseph (2000) mentions in a context of reporting on soft news that professional association of flowers with women or vice versa seems to have continued into the 1970s and 1980s with the addition of fashion, beauty, and entertainment in 1990s. Placement of female journalists for covering these ‘soft beats’ has been the primary indication of confinement of women journalists against their choices. One of the interviewees in her book shares that when she protested against being repeatedly marked for flower shows, the then chief reporter at *Times of India*, Delhi reasoned that there is no one else on the team who knows about flowers.

Working on a desk is usually considered a more appropriate place for women in the profession. Joseph (2000) writes that for women journalists those who are working in Indian Language press tend to be sidetracked into magazines. Handling women’s pages is the obvious task assigned to them, other than features pages, or low priority district or regional editions. When women get a posting to a general desk which handles the ‘real’
news, they get to report on weather reports, city engagements, entertainment listing, and other such routine clerical work.

A survey report (2014)\textsuperscript{55} ‘Where are the women?’ published online by NewsLaundry.com examines gender representation in four leading English-dailies in India brings out that “the gender gap becomes more distinct when you look at beats like sport, crime, national security (including stories on the Central Bureau of Investigation, home and defense ministry and so on) and business. The survey shows that the business selected newspapers for the study papers combined had only 28 per cent women writing for them. The sports pages had only 4 per cent. Beats like crime, governance and policy and foreign policy, too, had a small percentage of women writing for them. Are women then still confined to reporting on what are traditionally as so-called "soft" beats and women's issues?”

Apart from questioning the binary of hard news and soft news, it is also important to understand that this division of work reflects an archetypal social hierarchy of work based on the gender division of labour in society and seems to replicate it through a division of beats. The construction of ‘hard’ beats and ‘soft’ beats in journalism which has been in dominance indicates a glass-ceiling within the structure.

\textit{Rekha:} It is hard to work on your choice of area because you are new and you are pushed to the events like covering schools’ annual function or to cover inaugural function of some institute but not in education as a core beat.

\textit{Men make a hierarchy of beats like politics, crime, business are more prominent and reputed whereas art, culture, beauty, fashion these women issues are inferior beats. Personally, I have worked on variety of issues and covered at length I never felt that there is any subject which is specially made for men or women journalists.}

\textit{Initial days of my career remained stuck in a dividing line between what is for man and what is for woman because male journalists do not want that there should be any woman challenging them. Thus there is a constant tension to protect the 'hard' beats meant for men, but there are women who take interest and now doing so well in these areas too.}

The division of work based on the gender is designed by the men who control decision-making power in journalism. The allocation of work is not always according to journalist’s choice of work or according to their expertise in a particular area. This divide or binary of beat has deep roots. Especially in Hindi print media women journalists felt that it is a deliberate effort from men in not letting go hard beats to women. Considering women’s issues as inferior is already a sign of a gender-politics. This binary of hard and soft beats is their structural method to keep women out of the issues considered important. It confines them to soft news which is considered of less importance as soft news doesn’t require immediacy because it doesn’t have ‘informational value’ and it is all about features or human-interest stories (van Zoonen, 1999 cited in North, 2014).

*Missing: Half the Story* (2010) an anthology edited by Kalpana Sharma presents various issues such as violence and conflict, health and sanitation, sports, business, politics, economics and environment and disasters from a gender point of view. This work critically brings out the linkages within the coverage of various issues and missing gender perspectives in reporting in the Indian context. The absence of women journalists in hard news and issues leads to the absence of a gender perspective in news and coverage presenting male-centric views.

Shivani: Because of gender only particular beats are assigned to woman and man. It is a kind of strict untold rule here and sometimes gets flexible due to lack of proficiency in language among male colleagues. Here in this city the male workforce have relatively low education level and have bilingual (Hindi, English) capacity. The men find it easier to take out the news while gossiping Neta ji, Bhaiya ji or Sir ji politics, sharing a cigarette, chewing Paan (Betel leaf) and for them here politics is more of being loosely talkative and pleasing the ministers through their pro-party coverage. And they find it easy to do because for them it is the choice of work defining it as the most known hard beat thus they keep women away from core political reporting.

Whereas women are smart learner and pick up language skills quickly thus they perform better in such refined and so called most perfect beats like art, culture, celebrity reporting even if it is not of their choice. Bharat Bhavan is the center

---

56 Bharat Bhavan is a multi-arts centre and museum in Bhopal, India. It was established in 1982 and funded by the Government of Madhya Pradesh though it is run by an autonomous a 12-member Bharat Bhavan Trust. It is also known for its unique architecture designed by Charles Correa.
for art and cultural performances, and majorly women reporters are there to cover the events or interview the artists. But when it comes to writing some critical angle or some kind of political angle a male journalist is again preferred rather than a woman.

Certainly I do not want to be typed myself in a particular beat like art and culture, I know why and how to say and pick up my choice of beat.

Due to inferiority mentality of male in Hindi print media, they have deliberately tied women to these challenging tasks, and ironically the men define these beats as inferior and of low importance.

Don’t you think ‘politics is in every beat’, and every beat is a politics in itself” because I understand that art and culture even fashion are major areas of politics, isn’t it? Art and culture beat certainly does speak a lot about the history, geography, society and all possible linkages to politics.

Her narrative hits the core of the politics of the construction of hard beats and soft beats. She suggests that making ‘politics’ as the most important hard beat in the context of Hindi print media. It actually tells the sense of power among men in being political journalists. It also reflects that for them following the jargon like ‘Sir ji, Bhaiya ji, Neta ji,’ work favorably to get news through networking. The nature of covering the politics seems already prohibited for women because it demands certain methods of networking.

Women journalists appear to cover more art and culture which shivani suggests that due to their command over language and performance they do well. Defining art and culture as an inferior beat underscores the incompetence of male journalists not to be able to these areas according to her view. The question raised in her narrative is a deconstruction of the so-called soft beats because she points out that there is every politics in art and culture beats too.

Here she is trying to unpack the nature of reporting which is kept shallow through just taking interviews of artists and reporting the performance but not writing critically about art and culture. Her strong view gives a clue that ‘politics’ in so-called soft beats is again artificially created. Mies (1998, p. 46) writes:

“…men and women simply divide different tasks between themselves, it hides the fact that men’s tasks are usually considered as truly human ones (that is,
conscious, rational, planned, productive, etc.), whereas women’s tasks are again seen as basically determined by their ‘nature’. The sexual division of labour, according to this definition, could be paraphrased as one between ‘human labour’ and ‘natural activity’. What is more, however, this concept also obscures the fact that the relationship between male (that is, ‘human’), and female (‘natural’) labourers or workers is a relationship of dominance and even of exploitation.”

Challenging the order of the work, women in this field have been working on so-called hard beats too, and they accept all the challenges coming in their way. It has nothing to do ‘being woman or man’ to cover any beat in journalism. It is more about journalist’s interest, involvement, and understanding of their work which applies to both woman and man. Roshani reasons that why male journalists stick to constructed ‘hard beats,’ she explains that

**Roshani:** Though there is the rarest possibility to get a male covering so-called ‘soft beat.’ But I know a male journalist here who has been covering art, culture, and religion for a longer period, covering these beats while promoting the party and religious groups and its people. And he can never write about any other thing, he apparently denies. Recently, here I have done many stories on elections covering different angle stories from human touch, gender and more but male cover straight about party allegations, clashes, naming and blaming in political parties and politics.

There is an ego factor too who do hard beats, and also they cannot do or do not want to do any other beat. Yes, a crime reporter cannot write any other news or even politics. Male reporters want such beats which could bring them more money. Crime Reporter earns the most and those who cover municipal and politics also make money beyond facts and apart from their salary. They remain in one such beat as they know it brings a lot of money.

**Most of these male journalists show as they can’t change their beat to avoid extra workload and don’t want to leave the earning sources too.**

Her narrative is helpful to go to the roots of so-called hard beats. With the account of rarest male journalists covering art and culture, she elaborates that male journalists are not flexible to switch to another beat. Also, they show a rigidity towards their occupied beat which is politics. This narrative again points out that a woman is allowed to cover gender and human touch stories which are also considered falling under the soft beats. She also mentioned that even if by chance male journalist includes any of the soft beats it would become of importance because they promote the party ideology and religious
values. Here the term ‘masculine politics’ is used in the context about power-contestations among males in politics.

The theorization of ‘hard beats’ does not only involve a gender politics to keep women out or marginalized but is also a money-game. In connection with patriarchy and capitalism, it explains the politics of resources and power linking it directly to the sexual division of work. It elaborates accumulation of the economic resources and execution of the power through a division of labour while keeping women at periphery and man at the core.

I would like to emphasize the term ‘rigidity in male journalist not to leave the beat’ because this ‘rigidity’ actually supports the structure to maintain the divide between hard beats and keeping these in the control of male journalists. A web portal ‘The Caravan’\(^{57}\) published a story revealing the state, real estate and fourth estate nexus being hand in gloves regarding ‘Vyapam scam’\(^{58}\) in Madhya Pradesh.

‘Paid news’ should be considered in the same discussion because they mostly fall in hard beats categories like politics especially election-period, business and crime where the men are the positions of power. The male journalists take over these beats thus money, and power strengthens rule of men in these beats. Behind the scenes, such beats is money – minting beats due to which, in poorly paid Hindi print media, male journalists do not want to lose the grip on these hard beats. ‘The Hoot’ an Indian web portal published a piece ‘Paid news in the Hindi press’ with extracts from an unreleased Press Council report titled "Paid News: How corruption in the Indian media undermines democracy”

---


\(^{58}\) The Vyapam scam involves politicians, senior officials and businessmen in massive corruption in Madhya Pradesh Professional Examination Board (MPPEB) popularly known by its Hindi acronym “Vyapam” (Vyavsayik Pariksha Mandal). There have been unexplained - mysterious deaths of accused and witnesses during the course of investigation. A Journalist, Akshay Singh who worked with TV Today died soon after taking the interview of the parents of an accused in the scam.

which provides a detailed account of paid-news in Hindi language press which has questioned the credibility of media.

_Vijeta: There is a sharp division of work done between male and female journalist regarding hard and soft beats. Like Medical, Collectorate, Crime, Politics, Religion is considered hard beats and men keep these beats under them and never leave them due to the kind of networking and news sources are there bring them money and a power sharing in the nexus of the influential people._

Another respondent also shares a similar view that as mainly it covers those areas which involve power, status, and money manipulation to maintain status-quo are linked to hard beats or male-politics. Also, these are areas where maximum corruption is involved. Mostly it is an openly known story, but it kept under-cover of hard beats.

Due to market expansion and urbanization, there have been many new beats emerging in journalism promoting more lifestyle reporting but still, it tries to replicate the strict line between hard beats and soft beats. The demarcation between hard beats and soft beats sounds unrealistic because there are inter-linkages of power, money, and class. Declaring soft beats as a ‘feminine-stuff’ doesn’t eliminate the politics of art, culture and fashion and more subjects engaging woman. I want to argue that art, fashion, and culture have everything to do politics as, art, culture, and fashion are instrumental in the expression of liberal and progressive ideas. According to American Association of University Women report (AAUW, 2010, p. 19), “the notion that men are mathematically superior and innately better suited to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) fields than women remains a common belief. A large number of articles addressing cognitive gender differences as an explanation for the small numbers of women in STEM.” Whereas it has been debunked that men have a better brain than women but men have a mathematical brain is still a strongly reinforced common belief.

Stretching the argument, Nordell (2014)\(^{59}\) writes that “Because trans people are now staying in the same careers (and sometimes the very same jobs) after they change

genders, they are uniquely qualified to discuss the difference between how men and women experience the workplace.”

Nordell (2014) informs on critical aspect of questioning of woman’s mental capability that

> “Ben Barres is a biologist at Stanford who lived and worked as Barbara Barres until he was in his forties. For most of his career, he experienced bias but didn’t give much weight to it—seeing incidents as discrete events. (When he solved a tough math problem, for example, a professor said, You must have had your boyfriend solve it.) When he became Ben, however, he immediately noticed a difference in his everyday experience: People who don’t know I am transgendered treat me with much more respect, he says. He was more carefully listened to and his authority less frequently questioned. He stopped being interrupted in meetings. At one conference, another scientist said, Ben gave a great seminar today—but then his work is so much better than his sister's.” (The scientist didn't know Ben and Barbara were the same person.)

This experience of a trans-gender person describes gender-stereotyping placing woman’s mind as inferior and incapable of logic and reasoning. Questioning woman’s mental ability has been the rigid stereotype which is still carried forward making a profession gendered, generally reinforcing gender stereotypes.

Cyrus and Mather (1998, p. 103) mention that “nevertheless, many textbooks retain the bias of earlier histories, for the medieval period shares with the Renaissance prevailing cultural assumptions about the role of women in the past. Knowledge about the exclusion of women from universities and most schools, some authors suppose them to be too uneducated to participate in musical life.” It should be considered that omission of women from histories and knowledge production has been a systematic effort through ignoring their presence. Thus women’s work is rendered to worthless, and her presence in particular field is socially constructed equal of no worth. Cyrus and Mather (1998, p. 105) state, “Feminist theorist and pedagogue Peggy McIntosh has such exploration and elucidation of the "worthies" of history as "womanless" and it points to a selected few

---

winners (nearly always men), who meet high exclusionary standards of excellence; the losers at this stage are invisible.”

I want to stretch the argument here to argue that so called soft bets are a socially construction where because women are handling them are considered soft beats and once a male enters these beats will be regarded as important. My observation is that scholars studying women journalists support the argument that women are challenging the roles between the binary of hard and soft news. Women prefer to report hard news like politics, business to either eliminate binary while placing hard news again at the top over soft or denying gendered prejudice in binary of hard and soft news. A respondent mentioned that “the division between hard beat and soft beat depends on individual’s choice. If a woman is not strong she cannot cover hard beats.”

In journalism, the politics of beats involves socio-economic power relations which North (2014) finds in her work that “boys’ club” or “mates” mentality works to exclude women’s ability and access from hard news category. North (2014) critiques scholarly definitions of hard and soft news as they are ubiquitous and not all agree on gendered nature of this distinction of news.

Journalism has its politics of profession which clearly reflects gender politics. “Being strong” is such a loaded term which is used in this occupation to justify the dominant social division of work making invisibilizing gender discrimination and politics.

‘Being strong’ is part of the politics behind the beats and which keeps the women journalists systematically away from these male-dominated areas in Hindi journalism. Few respondents take it as a ‘personal boundary or limitation’ to acknowledge or identify the demarcation between soft and hard beats because for them it is more about individual’s skills and knowledge above than fighting for the choice of work.

One study shows that journalists are socialized into professional and organizational norms (Gieber, 1961) which are man-made and set in the practice of journalism. As members of a particular culture, journalists do share some core values, ideals, and preferences, e.g., American journalists tend to accept basic premises of capitalism (Gans, 1979). In Hindi journalism, the dominant ideology is patriarchal in nature which is
replicated through controlling the professional structure and functioning. Respondents have shared their experiences while being in Hindi print journalism that binary of hard and soft beats is very much constructed based on social biases to establish the hierarchy placing hard news above all.

5.3 Women Journalist: Low-paid Labour?

The neoliberal economy has affected media gripping it with job insecurity and low-paid jobs. Interestingly it is global phenomena that women are paid less with wage-gap in comparison to their male colleague and the preferred choice to be fired. An American author and journalist Jill Abramson, was fired from Times newspaper's executive editor position.\(^{61}\) She discovered that her pay and pension were considerably less than the male editor whom she replaced in the job. Confronting the top brass regarding pay discrepancy brought her a gendered reaction labeling her as a ‘pushy character’ rather than addressing the wage-gap and pension disparity. This is a global issue that women face wage-gap in comparison to their male counterparts.

In Indian context of print media, dissatisfaction towards poorly-paid Hindi print media jobs is commonly expressed among journalists. Especially in context of Madhya Pradesh, the popular media news portal ‘Bhadass4media.com’\(^{62}\) has been the most expressive about the ‘low salary or no salary crisis’ prevalent in Hindi print media.

In this research, women journalists echo their experiences over salary issues, when asked about their pay they are not very comfortable to share. Pointing out the contractual job system existing in journalism they suggest that it is very low-paid job they have been doing in Hindi print media. Understanding this aspect is an important dimension

---


concerning the economic value of women’s work in journalism in a particular socio-cultural context. Taylor (1980, cited in Soni-Sinha, 2008) argues that skill categorization is saturated with sex and the devaluation of the work done by women as unskilled is related to their subordinate status. Reducing woman’s economic rewards for the same work is reproducing under-valued worth of a woman based on sexual division of labour.

Shivani: Contract system is the common reality which ranges from three months to two years depending on particular media organization’s Human Resources Department’s policies while applying certain terms and conditions. Regarding salary its main dissatisfaction that the kind of hard work and time you give to the profession, you are underpaid. Moreover, there is enormous salary difference between males and females; usually, it is all justified in the name of experience and mind skills. Moreover, sometimes it is frustrating that your male colleague is paid more for the same job profile which you are doing. Isn’t it that woman are treated as ‘cheap’ labour? And their social-limitations make it in favour the employers to keep them at a lesser salary.

This narrative tells that the lack of a decent salary structure for all positions in journalism makes it more discriminatory in nature wherein the top positions get the huge amount of pay and the reporter gets a survival wage. For many young women journalists, they keep the salary very low often being on unpaid internship for a long period.

The contract system is the ‘open-secret’ and each media organization takes advantage of the availability of cheap labour in the job market. This unprofessional treatment is common practice in journalism. Shivani’s narrative brings out the major cracks in Hindi print media as women are not paid equally for equal work. Her understanding shows that woman are treated as cheap labour as organizations or newspapers do not want to spend on paying women. Also, a social limitation as a woman attached with domestic responsibilities makes her less powerful to negotiate her rights. It is to be noted that woman is hired on contract basis which reduces her autonomy to demand for rights to raise voice against salary discrimination.

Existing salary discrimination between the top layer and bottom, mentioned in her narrative marks the professional hierarchy maintained in journalism. Interestingly, the unpaid-internship work is another reality which a woman continues with the expectation of getting a job but still does not eventually get a decent amount of the salary.
Respondents have mentioned that during initial struggle days of their career they had to work without any pay beyond certain internship period with the hope of getting a job. Ironically, when an organization is not paying then hoping for a job while stretching the period of unpaid work cannot bring job, it shows exploitation of the available cheap or free of cost labour. English print media in comparison to Hindi print media in regard of salary is more professional.

*Sangeeta: Despite working in this field for more than a decade my job is not permanent or secured; salary is not justified according to the working hours and nature of job. I have two daughters and I do have to contribute towards economic responsibilities. This print job is not enough thus I am looking for some other parallel option like freelancing to meet the expenses.*

*On the one hand it’s a fight to demand a decent salary, on the other hand, it gives rise to the job insecurity as one might lose the job too. Working already for certain contract – period work on a probability of renewing the contract but it is not certain. Newspaper can ask you anytime to leave the job with any unreasonable reason without explaining much. I have faced that situation where editor of the newspaper informed me that they are sacking me because they find I am not performing up to the mark. Being on contract is already being silent about the known discrimination.*

Another respondent talked about job-insecurity in journalism:

*Roshani: The job-insecurity makes employer ask women to leave or resign easily because they are not the only income source in family thus women are preferred to be fired first. The contract-system favours employers as they can ask anytime to leave the job.*

These narratives of respondents describe that the difficulties of looking for a different job because journalism is low-paid. Bearing financial responsibilities on the domestic front worsens women’s position because there is a fear of losing the job.

The contract system is ‘known-secret’ which reduces journalists’ freedom. The contract system snatches away liberty to negotiate for rights as a professional and makes women journalists more vulnerable. We cannot ignore the emerging media ownership patterns where “neoliberal policies have given rise to what critics call a ‘feminisation’ of labour, accompanied by a deterioration of working conditions-casualisation, flexibilisation,
violation of international labour standards and low wages” (Moghadam, 2005 cited in Cornwall et al., 2008).

Women are an easy target to be fired because they are not considered the ‘main breadwinners of the family. Thus women are considered less professionally eligible to work and earn rightfully, unlike men. It leads us to understand capitalist- patriarchal system which reproduces difference as hierarchy. In this system women stabilize patriarchal structures of the family by being housewife, mother simultaneously they are also the source of producing new workers, for both paid and unpaid labour force (Eisenstein, 1999). Thus women while working for and at lesser wage construct their role as producers of labour force and consumers through patriarchal institutions and ideologies.

The respondent’s experience suggests that a newspaper holds the power to sack a woman on many unreasonable grounds which creates a loss of autonomy in the profession. It is a paradox of capitalist-journalism which benefits by retaining inequalities. The creation of job insecurity in the media helps the media owners to get their work done at the expense of its workforce. Thus women are considered as cheap labour to be employed on contract basis.

*Shivani: For women journalists, there is no compulsory reimbursement of phone bills, petrol for using our their vehicle for reporting, no facilities regarding safety- security while traveling for some assignment this way newspaper-employers keep a tight-hand. They don’t consider women worth – spending on even on professional assignments. It is widely known that women journalists are not paid equally for the same job position. There is a difference in salary of a female editor in comparison to a male editor; he is paid more apparently.*

*Apeksha: Once I had to travel for some official assignment to another state, and I was told that for junior reporters tickets are booked in second class sleeper category but as you are traveling in the night it is done in an affordable Air Conditioned (AC) category. This one thing became a matter of obligation as if my organization is showing big heart to allow and spend on my third AC ticket. I was told every possible occasion that office has paid your AC ticket. I got pissed, and I made it clear that next time better I will do my ticket rather than hearing such thing from office.*
The women journalists who chose to do reporting work have to manage their travel and phone calls expenses otherwise one has to be desk-bound. This is another conditional freedom in journalism where hiring a woman is cheaper because payments on her salary and other arrangements while on assignment are low. Shivani’s narrative mentions the wage-gap as a male editor is paid more than a woman editor. Hindi print journalism keeps the contradiction intact while not increasing the number of female journalists in higher positions and constructs them as low-paid cheap labour. Hindi print media shows many paradoxes when it comes to employing women journalists. On the one hand, it pays women less with the mindset that women are not professionals they are working out of choice not out of economic necessity.

_Harshita: Most of the women choose to be silent. This silence of women on salary-discrimination allows Hindi journalism to keep them underpaid for years. If women try to raise their voice, they are mostly aware of the consequence which is leaving the job. After working for three years for the newspaper I asked the employer for salary increment, and he answered what you would do with the pay hike, you are not going to feed your family, we’ll see later about this. I asked him that do I need to explain that I was never given any salary increment whereas there are males who joined with me have got. I was answered by the editor that you can resign we will hire somebody else, Anyways women leave a job because they get married and make a family._

It shows that how the issue is not addressed giving little choice to dialogue for women journalists. This contradictory attitude of Hindi Journalism takes advantage of women journalists’ socially weaker position which is useful to give them a job at low-cost, low-salary and with the presence of a charitable attitude towards them at a workplace.

Thus economically, women professionals remain a ‘low-paid workforce’ in journalism where they do the same journalistic job as men. The idea is that women are not bread winner but they are jam, or they provide just jam presume that women are working either for fun or leisure. Journalism materializes socially weaker position of a woman making her feel guilty for getting married and having a family thus pay them less or ask them to resign. This is another layer of oppression and exploiting women’s presence while maintaining the status-quo.
In a news article ‘Tackling Occupational Sexism’  Joyce Sebastian (2016) writes “Occupational sexism refers to any gender-based discriminatory practice seen at the place of employment. While all jobs have their dignity, women are often relegated to take care of the menial work at offices.” One respondent shared the irony of the profession where women are considered as cheap labour, paid less and extent of discrimination is visible. The male contemporaries by then have become Editors holding top decision-making position while most of the women journalists are struggling to either save their job or continuing with the less deserving journalistic job profile and making promotion a rare for women journalists in Hindi print media. Overlooking women and not recognizing their contributions at a workplace is a global phenomenon. Joyce Sebastian (2016) cites from an article titled ‘Madam CEO, Get Me A Coffee,’ Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg and author Adam Grant lay bare the kind of gender stereotyping that is rampant at workplaces at this time and age. She cites the case of a female manager, who volunteered to assist a client, trained several new hires, improved a presentation and planned the office holiday party but was overlooked when it was time for promotion.”

It creates a structural exclusion of women journalists in print media too where women are under-paid, under-represented. Apart from being treated as cheaply available labour still promotion for women is rare for women journalists in Hindi print media.

5.4 Awards and Recognition in Hindi Print Journalism: Where are the Women?

A system of awards and recognition is a form of appreciation and encouragement of one’s efforts and contribution in particular field. In a context of this study I attempt to understand the award-system existing in Hindi print media to recognize work of the


journalists. It has been most prevalent system almost in all organization with an effort to motivate and to encourage others.

When it comes to acknowledging work of women journalists, there is sexism and bias. An article titled ‘Press Awards: how hard is it for women to get nominated?’ published on the news portal ‘The Guardian’ reports that in the United Kingdom “total over last six years there have been 552 Press Awards nominations for men and just 163 for women.” The bias against women journalists’ nomination has been clearly evident stating “Some of the areas where women are represented in the Press Awards lists are not considered as specialist domains for men. For example, 24 nominations for the best feature writer in a popular newspaper, in the last four years are bifurcated as 23 nominations for men, and just one for a woman.”

In another story ‘The World According to Men’ on the web portal ‘The Atlantic', Christina Asquith writes “for most of the 19th and 20th centuries, women war correspondents were rare creatures-considered intellectual oddities, more likely to be fetishized than taken seriously as news gatherers.” She also emphasizes that “repeatedly awarding men’s reporting over women’s feeds a cycle that perpetuates the relative authority of men’s voices over women’s.”

It is a rarity when it comes to award women journalists for their work and contribution. According to the Fuller Project for International Reporting “In the last two decades, even as more women have broken into the field, men still won nearly three times as many


67 Christina Asquith is a journalist based in Istanbul. She is the founder of the Fuller Project for International Reporting, a non-profit news organization which addresses imbalance in women’s voices in media coverage of conflict zones, foreign policy and international affairs. Retrived from http://fullerproject.com/ accessed on July 31, 2016.
Pulitzers as women for foreign reporting. Since the mid-1990s, Britain’s prestigious Foreign Reporter of the Year, which is given out at the British Press Awards, has gone 17 times to men and eight times to women. In the last decade, the Robert Capa Gold Medal Award for photojournalism has been given to nine different men and only one woman.  

In Indian context, the prestigious Ramnath Goenka Award for Excellence in Journalism for the year of 2011-2012 were given to 59 journalists from print and broadcast journalism for different award categories and the number of women journalists was 16 as award recipients. Amidst the missing representation and recognition of women journalists there is Chameli Devi Jain Award for an Outstanding Woman Mediaperson and it was first awarded in 1982.

In my research I tried to understand here how journalists’ work is (not) recognized, and I tried to find that how Government of Madhya Pradesh acknowledges journalists’ work. The role of awards and recognition shows a link between the state and media function as appeasing link between each other for power and rule interests.

Frey (2006) writes that if an alien were to see in the social life of people on earth, will be amazed by the huge number of awards offered in the form of orders, medal, prizes, titles, decorations and other honours. It is hard to find any area of society where awards are not offered. Frey (2006, p. 382) critically writes:

“Governments consciously exploit the binding effect of awards. They offer awards to persons who they know do not entirely agree with their ideology and policy. The potential recipients find themselves in an awkward position. If they refuse to accept an award, they must face the wrath of the government, and

---

68 The Pulitzer Prize is an award given for achievements in newspaper, magazine and online journalism, literature, and musical composition in the United States. It was established in 1917 by provisions in the will of American (Hungarian-born) Joseph Pulitzer who himself was a newspaper publisher. This award is administered by Columbia University in New York City.


strongly negative consequences are possible. If they accept the award, they are to some extent bound, and other people will consider them to be supporters of the regime.”

In this connection, somewhere receiving the awards is also a symbol of accepting the rule of the government which makes it difficult for a journalist to challenge the state. The awards in field of journalism have been an old tradition to acknowledge contribution of the journalists. Madhya Pradesh government’s Public Relations Department offers twelve awards in the field of Journalism. These awards are:

- Ganesh Shankar Vidhyarthi Award – For commendable work in the field of Journalism at National level
- Manik Chandra Bajpai Award - For Objective Journalism
- Vidyaniwas Mishra Award - For Development Journalism

The eligibility for these awards categories needs A senior journalist of minimum 50 years of age, having 20 years of work experience in this field. The award money is rupees two lakh.

- Satyanarayan Srivastav Award – For commendable work in Political reporting, in Print or Electronic media.

The eligibility for this award category requires 15 years of work experience having minimum 10 years of political reporting experience. Award money is rupees One lakh.

- Mahendra Chaudhary Award – For Photo Journalism

The eligibility for this category is with five years of experience and has to attach 20 photo entries a for nomination. The award money is rupees One lakh.

Other Regional Awards are:

- Sharad Joshi Award (Bhopal, Narmadapuram region)
- Rahul Barpute Award (Indore)
- Ratanlal Joshi Award (Gwalior, Morena region)
• JeevanlalVerma ‘Vidrohi’ Award (Jabalpur)
• KanhaiyaaLaalVaidya Award (Ujjain)
• Master Baldev Prasad Award (Sagar)
• Banarasi Das Chaturvedi Award (Rewa, Shahdol region)

Active journalists in these regions in Madhya Pradesh having minimum 15 years of work experience are eligible for the nomination and award money is rupees fifty one thousand (INR 51000). These awards are offered by Government of Madhya Pradesh. All the awards are in the name of male journalists for their contributed in their respective fields in journalism whereas women have been working in journalism for a long time. Madhya Pradesh has a rich history of Hindi journalism (Meena R., 1989; Shukla, 2001; Anuja, 2015) but their presence has been an ignored issue in journalism.

Shivani: Awards are sometimes a total politics of appeasement to reward the media which in turn will favour the state and its ideology, thus most of the award-receivers are male.

Women are rarely awarded, firstly the work – experience in journalism in a number of years seem tough to match the criteria and even if they are awarded it certainly doesn’t help to get them promotion or job-stability. Many a times women just don’t pay attention to apply and send a nomination for awards entries because it’s actually a kind of lack of confidence in their work.

Any recognition in this field is directly attached to the character of the woman; her success is not accepted whereas when males receive the award, nobody questions their character to assess the success in journalism.

The state awards have politics with embedded dominant ideology, Shivani’s narrative expresses the appeasement of the journalists by the ruling party. The whole process of awards involves another symbolic execution of power through which journalists are used as a vehicle to work for the government or at least to not challenge it.

Her narrative has the potential to understand how women themselves find their work less worthy, and do not send it for nominations for awards which indicates lack of confidence in their work. They also do not take initiative to nominate their own work for journalistic award categories. Receiving award by any woman is not something taken as her
deserving share of reward and hard work, but it is attached with character assassination to show a kind of rejection of female journalists’ capability and achievements.

*Apeksha*: Already the number of women journalists is less that too confined to certain beats. Hardly a woman continues in the profession seeking promotion with job stability thus the way to award is already seems unattainable. Journalism strategically wipes out women journalists’ and their contribution which is entirely a male-controlled attitude.

*Your own organization manipulates when it comes to sending the entries for the award nominations. I had faced this credit-stealing attitude when my most commanding story which was on the front page for consecutive 3 weeks was missing from the list. It hurts a lot, you feel like screaming out but ultimately nothing happens, and again you are asked to prove more. I kept fighting for my missing nominations, and everything was blamed on the technical error and involving names, the whole experience was so disappointing and made feel so cheated.*

Sense of being under-represented is sensed not only at the workplace but when it comes to acknowledging the work and rewarding it, it seems that women journalists are at a disadvantaged end. Already they find it difficult to stick to their journalistic job but even if they go forward to claim their contribution, a respondent has mentioned her experience of credit stealing where her stories went missing, and she could not get through the process. Such incident reveals the petty-politics carrying so much of patriarchal gateways even in such open entry system for nomination for awards. Her sense of feelings cheated instead of being acknowledged describes that she could not have any space to address the matter nor did she trust the credibility of her organization and so had to let go the matter.

The awards and recognition are given to promote a quality work in the profession where one feels encouraged to keep working.

*Anita*: This field of journalism can give you awards, name and fame too but will never give you a position, respect and power. It’s completely a formality to maintain a fair balance to stay politically correct whereas awarding a woman hurt their fragile male ego because a denial of a woman is in their mentality.

The Indian women’s sacrificing attitude doesn’t let her become a fighter to ask for her right which is reflecting from these women journalist who follows a ‘silent-route’ to
survive in the profession. It is deeply injected through the conditioning at a journalistic profession which itself has patriarchal character.

While sharing experiences regarding recognition of women’s work in journalism a woman journalist ironically mentioned:

*Rashi: Forget about the big awards or recognition, editors, senior journalists in small city’s newspapers will not let woman journalists for reporting task of covering press conferences, events because generally press conferences offer gifts, goodies and more benefits of services if it is launch of some product or things like that. It might sound very mean practice but it does exist in small cities like us (Gwalior). So no rewards are left for woman journalists when editors themselves want to grab or snatch such chances from freshers or new comers. I have seen here newly recruited journalists submitting their freebies to senior journalists if they happen to go for any such even or conference.*

Her narrative reveals another side of the small cities’ journalism where reporters are not given exposure as seniors tend grab freebies from conferences and events. It shows quite unprofessional and mean mentality of journalists which is shows actually an unconscious power-greed to take benefit or advantages. It also reflects that material opportunism is practiced and such material gains through professional covering are more important which usually ignore professionalism in journalism and reducing it to a level of calculation of benefits.

The most powerful recognition is considered to get an Accreditation\(^{71}\) status to a journalist and they are also given certain professional benefits as per the state government norms and rules. There is a state-level list of the journalists issued by Department of Public Relations, Madhya Pradesh. The total number of journalists is 1062, registered for accreditation working with media including Hindi and English both. The number of

\(^{71}\) ‘Accreditation’ means recognition of news media representatives by the Government of India for purpose of access to sources of information in the Government and also to news materials, written or pictorial, released by the Press Information Bureau and/or other agencies of the Government of India. [http://pib.nic.in/prs/accreditationguidelines.pdf](http://pib.nic.in/prs/accreditationguidelines.pdf) accessed on July 28, 2016.

Accredited journalists are entitled to concessions on trains and buses fare, health facilities and other benefits.

female journalists is 47 out of 1062 in the list. Such a thin presence of women journalists reveals the male-domination in the media in Madhya Pradesh.

A senior male journalist working with reputed English daily in Bhopal shared a piece of information when asked about accreditation system in practice for journalists in Hindi print media in Madhya Pradesh. He said having accreditation is a great-acknowledgement for journalists. One must have at least ten years of work experience to be nominated for state accreditation which has certain benefits like 50 per cent rebate of railway fair, health insurance, State Government Housing quota, No toll-tax payment is charged for accreditation holder. He also said that recently Madhya Pradesh state government distributed Laptop (up to INR 40,000) for state accredited journalists.

The representation of women journalists is very low. The whole list of accredited journalists is dominated by male journalists which shows their stronghold and recognition in this profession. Being an accredited journalist is the most significant expression of professional identity, power, and status which allows them to receive perks and benefits from the state government.

Among the women journalists I interviewed only two of them have accreditation and rest of them do not. I visited the Department of Public relation to procure the accreditation documents to know the number of women journalists who have been awarded by state government but I was denied while saying that everything is available on the website and you could check the list there. I checked the list, these awards were announced for the period of last eight-years for different categories and only two women journalists was awarded for regional journalism for the year of 2008 and 2010. Rest all the categories with 86 awards for last eight years were awarded to male journalists. Only two women journalists are award recipients out of 86 male journalists, which shows that journalism has strong glass-ceiling.
5.5 Gendered Body and Work (place) Infrastructure

Connecting female body with particular socio-cultural space announces the perceived vulnerabilities and oppression of the woman. Women’s bodies are constructed with social and cultural norms and values which define their behavior and morality. Mathur (2008, p. 54) writes:

“The identification of women with their physical bodies is the cause of their oppression in a patriarchal culture and society like India. Most often women are denied the rights to emotional, mental, psychological and physical spaces. The fact that the female body is constantly under pressure to conform and mould into prescribed social and cultural roles brings into question the spaces that need to be protected as well rights that need to be claimed so that women's bodily integrity is respected.”

Understanding the workplace realities also means seeing women journalists as female bodies with biological needs. The mobility of a ‘woman’s body’ is supposed to behave according to time and location. The problem of accessing the toilet and a separate toilet is still a matter of a concern at workplaces. The infrastructure maintained by newspapers offices are seldom women-friendly and missing or non-functional toilets for women is a typical case.

Toilets are rarely cited or sighted in contemporary social sciences literature and “very few serious attempts at any analysis of what has been referred to as the faecal realm (Inglis, 2002), within the broader social sciences, this is a significantly under-researched, undermentioned and under-acknowledged sphere of human experience” (Dutton, Seth, and Gandhi, 2002; Inglis and Holmes, 2000 cited in Schapper, 2012, p. 495). It has been a less-discussed issue, especially when it is about having a toilet facility for women in general at a workplace.

A news article published in Economic Times reports

“Participation of women in the workplace has been steadily increasing, but facilities for them have not kept pace. Speak to almost any woman who has

worked for a few years and has experience of different workplaces, and you will get many stories about inadequate, poorly designed, poorly maintained and sometimes completely non-existent toilet facilities.

In the past, companies routinely refused to hire women on the grounds they didn't have toilet facilities for them. All-male offices were similar, causing problems like the one faced by one woman journalist who was commissioned to write a corporate history of one such place. When I went to interview executives they would offer me coffee, and I learned to refuse it because it would put me in an awkward position! she says.

Women working for one national newspaper had horror stories of the non-functional toilets. The women working in the newspaper office had to walk across the road to the five-star hotel on the opposite side.”

In the same news article, it is mentioned that

Toilets are a sign of the real level of inclusion of women in institutions. The Supreme Court's poor record with female judges is well known, and so is the tokenism with which some political parties treat women. One political correspondent notes that in the towns of western Uttar Pradesh, barring a few offices of BSP and Congress, most political parties especially SP and BJP have only male urinals. "There are very few women party members, and they spend very little time in office even if they happen to come. We have a toilet in the backyard that was cleaned when Smriti Irani was chosen as a candidate, but it was rarely used," a BJP member in Amethi said."

Even major political party offices are at same discriminating women when it comes to toilet while reasoning with low number of women or no use of toilet by women themselves.

It has been a widely ignored issue at most of the media organizations which lack hygienic toilet facilities for women employees. Few newly-constructed organizations have considered allotting toilets for female with all required facilities but still in old office buildings this is an ignored issue.

Roshani: I have worked with a local small Hindi Newspaper. The office–building is old and doesn’t have a separate toilet for woman. It was quite problematic for me, initially I used to avoid using the toilet but it couldn’t be done for every day or months. I try to raise the issue and demanded that office should have a separate toilet for women employees. I was told that women are

not permanent employees here thus we can’t spend to construct a separate toilet for them. Everyone uses common toilet.

For me it was difficult to use that toilet. While being on reporting job I used to ensure myself using toilets in malls or in some restaurants. Using the common toilet is a kind of forceful thing for me. The worst thing is that during menstruation, using common toilet, changing pads and everything has horrible experience as everything is noticed by males using the common toilets. Initially, there was no dustbin kept inside the toilet; I had to ask for that too. As it has been a small-local newspaper, for them it is not at all an issue or point to be considered.

Society has conditioned women not to talk about peeing as well as menstruation thus working in such a place where there is no separate toilet for woman is a grim situation. It is violation of her privacy. It is not only the matter of demanding for a toilet but asking for a basic right for women to have a separate toilet at her workplace. Being noticed by male colleagues is something which does not make her comfortable, missing dustbins draws the attention that presumably menstruation is not even considered. But as numbers of women rise, this is not ideal, for basic reasons of space and biology-women need stalls which take up more space than men's urinals, and they take longer.

According to a news article published in Economic Times, “In Rose George's 'The Big Necessary', a study of the world of human waste disposal, she cites research that establishes that women on an average take 90 seconds to urinate while men take 45. A logical design for an equitable workplace would allot more space to the women's toilet, and less to the men's, since more urinals can be put in a smaller space, and can be used faster. But very few architects - a male-dominated profession-would see it this way.”

Leaving women with no choice but to adjust with what they have at workplace is a discriminatory situation.

Apeksha: Recently our newspaper office shifted to a new building where a separate toilet is allotted for woman after a long wait. In previous building there was no separate toilet for women employees. Here I found something odd that

now men are curious to use women toilets and many a times it has been experienced an act of invading the privacy of the space even in toilet when women leave the office. One of my colleagues told me that when women are not in office male colleagues use their toilet too. Once we try to bring this in notice while complaining to our editor. He said that now what do you want... should we put CCTV camera to catch who is using the toilets.

Matter is not about surveillance but it is about mannerism and some kind of respect towards female body and importance of toilets for them. But here it is a small city, where allotting a separate toilet for woman is seen something like obligation to them.

Using women’s toilets by males has been an act of invading the privacy of women’s space but male do it whenever they get a chance. The authors of Why Loiter (2011) write that railway stations are among the few places where there are toilets for women. However, it has been found that some of the women’s toilets are being used by men, while others were locked or difficult to locate. Here it is the case of public toilets which ask women to pay more to use the toilet.

Discussing woman as female bodies, respondents brought out other health-related issues which are rarely considered by male-bosses. In an interviews a respondents said that sometimes it is really a need to have a female boss who could make women employee more comfortable with their presence.

Bhavan: While working for so many years I have experienced that males are highly insensitive and denies woman as a biological body. Even in need of urgency, if you face some severe health problems it is not considered as with the due understanding on contrary it is taken as an excuse from a woman not to work.
I sometimes wish to have a female boss so that I could easily give reason for my leaves.

Usually during the menstrual period, at least first two days, it becomes difficult to move and do reporting. I myself find it difficult to mention reason of my leaves every month but I believe without telling my boss must have understood, Certainly I can’t tell him. For women it is still a taboo to mention reason for their leaves or better say still to mention about any health issues because it brings attention to many unpleasant questions too. Your being on leave because of health problem is made of fun with insensitivity among male colleagues and many of them find it amusing for them to say ‘madam chutti per hai kyunki unake periods aa gaye honge’ (madam have got periods thus she is on leave) for them every reason for taking leave is ‘menstruation’.
Shivani: By the age of 38, female body gets to many biological problems and complications which never allow you to pursue the job requirements with the same body-comfort. In such case if you take leaves it becomes a topic of gossip among male colleagues and here is the strong ‘politics of absence’ which gathers all possible allegation to use the chance of being absent from workplace.

With aging a woman body faces a lot of complications and demands timely care but work pressure kept her on war foot not to lose her professional identity. I underwent a surgery and was suggested not to follow the hectic schedule and I had to take leaves. After recovery I had to switch to some other newspaper because I needed few days to rest and I was left with no option but to leave the newspaper.

Considering women as a biological body is taken as to be akin to seeing them more as a sexual body which again leads male journalists to ignore the requirements of the biological body and its implications for health.

Narratives reveal that male colleagues take male-chauvinistic attitudes suggest that woman journalist’s taking leave because of her menstruation which is still a taboo subject with no space for comfortable with your own menstruating body. Certainly, there is no friendly space for taboo-busting because often menstruation is understood through the concept of purity and impurity. There are jokes and nonsensical attitudes from men. To my mind, it reinforces the brahmanical understanding of the women body with ‘purity’ and ‘impurity’ dominantly reducing the body to a site of oppression. Phadke et al, (2010: 84) writes that if discussing the need to urinate is embarrassing for women then menstruation is completely a taboo.

In March, 2015 ‘Sanitary pad’ campaign took momentum in universities in India while raising the voice against rape and sexism in campus. The pads were stuck on walls in the campus written with messages that read: “Victim blaming is also called gender violence”, and “Naming and shaming the victim is sexual violence” linking it to ‘menstruation’ taboos. This campaign, as sanitary pads with anti-gender discrimination and gender

---

sensitization was described as “repugnant” by a group of teachers and students at the Jamia University\textsuperscript{76} where this campaign started from. But students from other universities supported the campaign.

Phadke et al., (2010, p. 82) write that any discussion about women’s bodily function is immediately linked to their sexuality and hence to be silenced. Their bodies are associated with bodily secretions-menstruation, ovulation, lactation are seen as sources of ritual contamination at particular times of the month of years. Silencing over women bodies functioning has been the most prevalent for her being uncomfortable with her body and its functioning.

When it comes to the context of the women journalists, working in Hindi print media has health consequences for women. Consciously drinking less water, tea to avoid use of the loo becomes a common choice also extreme form of bladder control that can sometimes lead to serious urinary tract infections Phadke et al., (2010).

\textit{Upasna: I avoid using the office toilet, it’s unhygienic and poorly maintained. I have observed that the even in the hour of emergency if I get up from my seat and move towards, all male-gaze follows me as if I am going to ‘cut red ribbon’. How long you can hold in, or never sip water.}

\textit{So, I have to be careful ...and I have to make a sudden move without thinking about those eyes watching me thus to my best I avoid using toilet here in the office.}

\textit{I have another female colleagues, she also says that whenever I get up I am seen, I is so stupid because even after spending a more than a years, I am not comfortable to make a move to the loo also it a daily-struggle within to get up or not, or when to get or more…the most disgusted part was that one day when she didn’t get up from her seat because she was busy, a male colleague actually commented on her next day that ‘yesterday you didn’t even get up whereas daily you do’. When she shared with me, we both were struck that our moves are being counted that made both of us more conscious.}

Drawing a self-boundary not to act on need and choice is the most common withdrawal coming from women in such situation like drinking less water for not using toilet or completely avoiding using the workplace toilet. It raises important points further, that the\textsuperscript{76} Jamia Millia Islamia is a public central university located in Delhi. It was established at Aligarh in United Provinces, India during British rule in 1920. It became a Central University by an act of the Indian Parliament in 1988.
act of using toilet is being watched, making a move from your seat is under the count by male colleagues it tells that women body is not having care-free mobility at all at her workplace. Mathur, Kanchan (2008, p. 54) argues:

“Most often women's identification with their bodies and its physical manifestation results in suppression and denial of rights to emotional, mental, psychological and physical spaces. This demarcation into mutually exclusive categories of mind and body results in loss of "personhood", loss of control and autonomy over their bodies and violation of bodily integrity.”

The self-imposition over our own body results into self-denial towards your own body which is strictly being regulated according to the external socio-cultural spaces. The nature of being extra careful gets converted into limiting her body to act according to her male-dominated surrounding. This disconnection between self and body generates repression of bodily needs.

Lack of free spaces to talk about these issues impacts the woman’s health and bodily autonomy. Getting a separate toilet for many small newspapers’ office is still an issue which is certainly never discussed because the social understanding of a woman body is not translated into its objective anatomy which deserves a toilet at her workplace.

5.6 Conclusion

Gender - stereotyping operates through the conventional binary of beats of hard and soft beats. Experiences of women journalists unravels that the thin presence of women in journalism results in omitted gender views from news-coverage. It reproduces a male-centric view of news-media. Also, it is a deliberate politics to keep certain beats like fashion, art, cinema, lifestyle, health as inferior beats associating them as jobs done by women. I argue that soft beats are not ‘apolitical’ at all. This reflects sexual division of labour in journalism. In Hindi journalism it is interesting to note that under the conventional binary many structured power centers are hidden in the name of hard beats like politics, religion, business, crime. These structured power centers sometimes operate through corruption. Paid-news culture, promoting political party’s ideology using
journalism clearly reflects that soft beats is a social construction which ensures a masculine power-nexus over hard beats. Though, women are challenging these roles by working on hard beats this has the effect of once again rendering soft beats inferior even as they challenge the binary of gender-stereotyping.

The economic value of women’s work has been a debated issue both in the domestic and professional spaces. Assessment of women’s labour is done through social value of their work which subordinates them because of their domestic roles of care-takers as mothers and wives. Thus women are considered a source of cheap labour available to work at lesser pay unlike men. There is lack of equal pay system and a persistent pay-inequality in Hindi print journalism where men are paid more than women for the same job. Hiring women as cheap labour on contract system reduces their power and autonomy in journalism with job-insecurity. This highlights nature of journalism in the post-neoliberal period revealing an existing capitalist patriarchal character of journalism which exploits woman’s labour.

Despite being active in Hindi journalism having a history of contribution women are omitted, missed and lost. Facing occupational sexism in journalism women’s work is not even acknowledged which reveals another dark side of Hindi journalism. This research identifies that journalism has a structural method to keep women out of the process of a professional rewards which ultimately results in rare press-awards for women journalists. By now Madhya Pradesh do have number of press awards in journalism which all are named after men. In small cities women themselves are not confident-enough to initiate a process of nominating their work for award-entry. Also, women’s experience underlines that the success of a woman as professional is socially judged. Awarding male-journalist in small cities encourages the government or state to use journalism as a vehicle for their propaganda tool. Men are seen as uncritically deserving candidates for power, recognition, awards and honour. In cities like Gwalior and Jabalpur women journalists shared their experiences of credit-stealing, missing stories which show that these cities have more patriarchal journalism which further discriminate against women through politics of awards. Whereas in Indore and Bhopal, there is some professionalism in acknowledging women journalists at least superficially.
Understanding journalistic workplace’s infrastructure in small cities has been an eye-opener to discern their gendered-character. Women journalists’ as female and biological bodies are ignored in the workplace making them more vulnerable by having no separate toilets for them. Having separate toilets is a matter of cost-expenditure and denying this right of women forces them to share common toilets with men. It directly affects women’s health too treating them less than a professional because of their gender. Male-centric workplaces ignore requirements of woman’s biological body and the right to have a separate toilet facility helping them during menstruation too. Jabalpur and Gwalior are more regressive nature as it is taboo to even talk about toilets. In Bhopal and Indore women respondents’ mention that they do have toilets mostly commonly shared but their embodied presence does have strong socio-cultural meanings. Despite being women journalists they cannot escape the attached taboos and shame associated with the female body and its processes. The disconnection between woman’s body and self generates self-denial towards biological functioning of body as many journalistic workplaces have old-buildings which are not even women-friendly.

This chapter argues that Hindi print journalism practices strong gender stereotypes at the workplace treating women as low-paid labour. It retains the constructed social inequalities which keeps women journalists “missing” from this profession. Hindi journalism finds women undeserving to be officially awarded for their contribution. It is highly gendered profession which ignores women’s professional rights as journalists and as individuals.