Introduction

Understanding Women Journalists’ Experiences working in Hindi Print Journalism in Cities of Madhya Pradesh

"You have to leave the city of your comfort and go into the wilderness of your intuition. You can't get there by bus, only by hard work and risk and by not quite knowing what you're doing, but what you'll discover will be wonderful. What you'll discover will be yourself." ¹

– Alan Alda

1.1 Introduction

The words ‘women and media’ bring to mind the image of a female news-anchor. The presence of women in media is often for decorative value which indicates a sexist media. The association of a female face with electronic media genders media images, but also ignores the fact that women are marginalized within print journalism. Examining gendered issues of women in media also opens up a range of critical debates within the linguistic and geographical context.

Women have negotiated for equal rights within the journalistic profession but have been unable to attain any semblance of gender equality. Focusing on a multiplicity of realities across social, cultural and geographical boundaries unfolds a variety of experiences of women journalists and establishes an exclusivity of the located knowledge in a particular geographical context. It is important to consider the geographical space which ultimately functions as spatial-material reality for individuals. Massey (2001) argues that geography matters in construction of gender including geographical variations in gender relations.

Geography functions as a significant element in producing and reproducing both imaginative geographies and uneven development.

In this study I seek to understand the presence of women journalists in print journalism in a particular geographical context. Moving from generalization to specificity of the issues and material realities includes critical debates on gender, media and geographical context. The study unfolds a critical matrix of intersectional boundaries within social relations of space with multiple power structures through the lived experiences of women journalists.


“the history and even more recent experiences of women in journalism demonstrate repeatedly that ‘women’s right to speak in public may easily be subverted’ by drawing attention to their femininity and the habitual questioning of their communicative competence.”

Women are treated as a subordinated category within journalism. This is practiced through a traditional binary, where women are told to report on what is seen to be soft news and men are assumed to be able to report on what is constructed as hard news. This often regulates the choice of work within the profession.

It cannot be denied that presence of women has influenced news-content and newsrooms’ complex processes of gender-power relations in journalism. This study aims to conceptualize women journalists’ position amidst the realities of Hindi language journalism. Negotiations in shaping role and influence of women journalists have been a constant struggle to challenge conventions and assumptions about gender in journalism. Though the number of women in journalism has risen within the lower rungs of the professional hierarchy, they are largely unable to access positions which demand decision-making. Women also work in sexist newsrooms facing day to day challenges of gender-power relations. Women are either missing from journalistic history or are sexualized objects. There is often a deliberate elimination of their contribution to journalism. Chambers et al., (2004, p. 4) examining the writing of biographies of women journalists mentions that
“Some biographers have even sexualized their female subjects in a way that is virtually unheard of with respect to male journalists. One of the most egregious examples is that of Marguerite Higgins, a Pulitzer prize-winning war reporter, whose biographers describe her attractiveness and stance of sexual liberation as much as her ambition (Schilpp and Murphy 1983, May 1983). Julia Edwards (1988: 191), whose discussion of other women foreign correspondents is celebratory, if not adulatory, attacked Higgins, her Columbia journalism school colleague, comparing her to Marilyn Monroe: ‘pretty, talented, sexy, and painfully insecure’. Even Edwards, however, is forced to note that while Higgins’s enemies accused her of sleeping with men to obtain her stories, her lovers were mainly fellow correspondents. Moreover, Edwards (1988: 196) concedes that male foreign correspondents who cheated on their wives aroused no criticism.”

Representing women professionals as unworthy and inferior shows that gender matters in journalism. Despite this unequal gendered structuring in journalism, women have been able to emerge as credible and independent journalists raising questions on professional hierarchy.

Women reporters have been more inclined to cover issues of women’s lives, personal views approaching women as a news sources which has given a broader perspective to the definition of news (Covert, 1981; Mills, 1997; Meyers, 1997; Skidmore, 1998; Christmas, 1997; Chambers, 2004; Joseph et al., 1994; Sharma 2010). Thus women journalists’ work and contribution which has been hidden behind male accomplishment needs an inquiry to reveal their work. Henry (1989) writes that a historian reviewed biographies of around 1,359 women in the three volumes of ‘Notable American Women’. The historian writes that several women preferred to let men take credit for their work. The existence of women’s presence and their contribution generally remains under-discussed in journalism especially in the Indian context. Experiences of credit-stealing are a common reality of many women journalists in India media.

It is important to consider a sociological analysis of journalistic profession by examining the nature of its work-force and gender relations. The narratives of women journalists draw certain themes consistently describing patterns of unequal treatment in journalism. Their lived experiences loudly sketch their demand to be treated as equal professionals and individual. Akhileswari (2014) writes that there has been a transformation in the Indian journalistic work force since 1960s when women journalists used to be an
exception in a male-dominated profession. This study is an effort to challenge the uncritical perception of women as a category in media. It focuses on the experiences of women journalists in small cities and attempts to bring a critical class and caste perspective to the analysis.

The expansion of Hindi-media indicates presence of major chunk of work-force engaged in journalistic work and the composition of the work-force needs to be analyzed from a gender perspective as well. This study aims to unravel the nature of Hindi print journalism to understand the gendered nature of journalism in Madhya Pradesh. My interest is to focus on women journalists’ lived experiences working in Hindi print journalism in Madhya Pradesh. Thus four cities i.e., Bhopal, Indore, Jabalpur and Gwalior emerge as an analytical category in the study. This study focuses on women’s lived experiences as professionals in journalism dealing with their day-to-day challenges and their negotiation in the profession. It aims at understanding the nature of Hindi journalism from women journalists’ perspective in a particular geographic location.

1.2 Hindi Print Media and its Significance

The structure of Indian media is made up of many language presses where no group enjoys monopoly but the way the media industry is rising shows signs of earning huge profit. The India Entertainment and Media Industry report (2006) says that with a booming Indian economy need for content and government initiatives have been growing. It has also opened avenues for foreign investment in the print media. The same report informs that the literate population is increasing in rural and urban areas reading newspapers and magazines. Global investors are showing interest in India which has led to a demand for content and the internet is emerging as news media which also generates adverting revenue.

Ninan (2007) writes that Hindi newspapers have picked up readers in places where there had been none in India’s Hindi heartland in the last decade of the 20th century. The Indian
Readership Survey (IRS)\(^2\) 2015 establishes that Hindi remains the most popular language for physical publications. It reveals that the top three publications are Hindi dailies. Dainik Jagaran has the top readership of 16.6 million. Hindustan has 14.7 million and Dainik Bhaskar has 13.8 million readership.\(^3\) The highest readership of Hindi dailies was recorded by the Indian Readership Survey \(^4\) (2012) Quarter-4 which shows that Hindi dailies Dainik Jagran, Dainik Bhaskar and Hindustan are the top three dailies having the highest readership across the country.

Ninan (2007) elaborates that the rise of television and its expansion into the rural hinterland created a demand for news. Television proved good for newspaper business as it increased a curiosity among viewers to look for the next day's newspaper. This was asserted thoroughly in the Hindi belt by newspaper proprietors, circulation agents and hawkers. Ninan (2007) further writes that the arrival of the modem making internet possible helped in transmission of newspaper pages composed at different districts and centres. Expansion of telecommunication with broad-band telecom also enabled newspapers to become viable.

Ninan argues (2007, p. 15) that

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“Hindi newspapers, harbingers of nationalism at the turn of the 20th century, had become harbingers of more material change by the turn of the 21st. They were now bursting with colour supplements and marketing coupons even as they brought politics, sports and news-you-can-use to rural and urban homes in village and small-town India. They brought a Hindi heartland, lagging in literacy till barely a decade earlier, onto the readership map and rapidly to the top of the readership charts.”
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\(^2\) Indian Readership Survey (IRS) was launched in the year 1995 with an objective of setting an industry standard for readership & other media measurement & to provide insights on media & product consumption as well as consumer behavior patterns.


\(^4\) Indian Readership Survey (IRS) was launched in the year 1995 with an objective of setting an industry standard for readership & other media measurement & to provide insights on media & product consumption as well as consumer behavior patterns.
Byerly (2004) explains that gender is deeply fixed in all things associated with globalization, which refers to the process by which national economic systems are restructuring into an integrated whole with a few nations at the center of control and the recognized beneficiaries. She critically mentions that the globalization process has been characterized by an international division of labor, quick transfer of capital through computerization, the privatization of many publicly held services and functions, and the concentration of ownership in manufacturing, banking and all other major industries. Byerly (2004) writes that there is little evidence that women have either the resources or legal strategies to enter into the industries in sufficient numbers to influence policy or production, in the interest of women, except on a limited basis.

In Indian context Pande (2004) writes that globalization with its symbiotic twin, urbanization, has effectively leveled the playing field in the English language media, accounting for despair among magazines, dismay among general interest/film and entertainment journals and wild celebration among major Hindi dailies. After having increased opportunities in media due to globalization it is necessary to study the location of women journalists and the dynamics at regional level where the market is still expanding.

The growth of media in the Hindi belt indicates job opportunities and rising competition. Thus it is important to analyze location of women as a work force in Hindi news media and its social-cultural composition. It has been less-discussed and studied that women are not treated as professionals in news media amidst all the organizational power-relations.

Pande (2004) explains that most of the women journalists come from small-towns and have studied in Hindi medium colleges where one does not make friends with the power brokers. My study (2011) found that female journalists of English media do have a greater cultural capital and have an edge over female journalists of Hindi print media. Especially in Hindi news media, it is important to understand the professional location of female journalists and their growth in their working space.

Byerly and Ross (2006) critically mention that issues of gender are deeply embedded but invisible aspect of the restructuring that has been taking place in news and other media.
industries in today’s global media scene. They explain that the tiny proportion of women working in senior position in the media, including in film, satellite and even new media, makes clear that the problem is not just with news media, but also with media industry more generally. While indicating the transformation in media they write that the changes in media and communication technology and increasingly global nature of mass media are forcing a reconsideration of the relationship of media to gender while considering extension of media control which lies outside media.

Despite having many studies, problems and challenges remain the same and still there is lack of reasonable explanations on such professional inequality in Hindi media. It should be noted that the work done on Indian media scene still does not cover important debates of Hindi news media and their problems and challenges. Thus my research work tries to locate the untouched issues of Hindi news media from gender point of view. Media exists as a fast expanding industry but its academic critical studies are lagging behind. The gender aspects are required to theorize the nature of work-force engaged in media and how it is being treated under certain ideological, organizational power relations. It is important to understand the degree of acceptance of women as professionals in a Hindi media structure.

The rapid expansion of media as industry is coming up with changing patterns of its functioning which is dependent on the labour engaged as a work force. Understanding the work-culture in Hindi print journalism from a sociological and gender point of view is relatively under-studied in academia. My study aims at understanding location of women in work-force in Hindi print journalism. The geographic location of study has been discussed giving a background of the study in the next section presenting the four cities Bhopal, Indore, Jabalpur and Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh.
1.3 Geographical location of the Study: The Context of Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh is the centrally located state in India. It is second largest state in India. Madhya Pradesh has large tribal population which is deprived of mainstream development, and is known as one of the least developed in India. According to the Economic and Human Development Indicators, UNDP (2011)\(^5\) factsheet it has 0.375 Human Development Index which is below the national average which shows poor development in Madhya Pradesh. The area of study for the research work is Madhya Pradesh specifically covering four cities, Bhopal, Gwalior, Jabalpur and Indore.

These four cities have been important from social, political, cultural and economic point of view having good number of media organization with a historical presence of Hindi print journalism. These four cities are seen as developing urban areas with prospective growth opportunities. In relation to my study these four cities have been selected to understand the pattern of Hindi print journalism through women’s lived experiences.

As per data released by Govt. of India for Census 2011, Indore, Bhopal, Jabalpur and Gwalior are the Urban Agglomeration (UA) coming under category of Million Plus UA/City.\(^6\) According to Census (2011) “an urban agglomeration is a continuous urban spread constituting a town and its adjoining outgrowths (OGs), or two or more physically contiguous towns together with or without outgrowths of such towns. An Urban Agglomeration must consist of at least a statutory town and its total population (i.e. all the constituents put together) should not be less than 20,000 as per the 2001 Census. In varying local conditions, there were similar other combinations which have been treated as urban agglomerations satisfying the basic condition of contiguity. Examples: Greater Mumbai UA, Delhi UA, etc.”\(^7\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Large Metropolitan Region</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indore</td>
<td>2,170,295</td>
<td>1,127,910</td>
<td>1,042,385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhopal</td>
<td>1,886,100</td>
<td>981,860</td>
<td>904,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jabalpur</td>
<td>1,268,848</td>
<td>661,436</td>
<td>607,412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwalior</td>
<td>1,117,740</td>
<td>596,697</td>
<td>521,043</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indore is the first metropolis city having highest population, followed by Bhopal, Jabalpur and Gwalior respectively. These four cities also have been selected as potential smart cities in Madhya Pradesh under the Smart City Mission. As per this mission urban renewable and retrofitting programmes will be conducted to make cities more citizen-friendly and sustainable.\(^8\)

Understanding the city and the emerging urbanization is relevant to my research. These cities have a significant historical presence of Hindi print media continuing till date with prominent media market too. The next section gives an overview of Hindi print media in the Hindi-speaking state, Madhya Pradesh.

### 1.4 Hindi Print Media in Madhya Pradesh: An Overview

Madhya Pradesh is a state in central India. Bhopal is the capital of the state and the largest city is Indore. Centrally located state is popularly known as the "heart of India" due to its geographical location in India, Madhya Pradesh is the second-largest state in the country by area.\(^9\) According to the annual report of the Press in India 2014-15, “the largest number of newspapers and periodicals registered in any Indian language was in Hindi with a figure of 42,493 publications.” The total number of registered publication language-wise shows that, in Madhya Pradesh there are 8194 Hindi publications whereas

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in English it counts only 241 publications.\textsuperscript{10} According to the 59\textsuperscript{th} annual report of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India titled Press in India (2014-2015) shows analysis of registered publications, Bhopal has 1220 Hindi Dailies and 44 English dailies, Indore has 497 Hindi dailies and 41 English dailies. Gwalior has 123 Hindi dailies and 6 English dailies whereas Jabalpur has 63 Hindi dailies and 9 English dailies.\textsuperscript{11}

The growth of Hindi print media has a significant market in Madhya Pradesh. According to \textit{afaqa reporter’s} special report (2013) in the past few years English was leading as media consumption was driven by the metros. But increased spending power in small cities has brought a shift triggering demand for regional content. National advertisers have been attracted to the increased penetration in small town India by Hindi dailies. This report further states that “Still, north Indian states, the traditional economic laggards, have been performing well in recent years and that creates a huge upside for Hindi newspapers.” In the same report, Girish Agarwal, promoter director of Dainik Bhaskar Corp Ltd has been quoted that “over the past few years, we have seen significant growth in the Indian regional print media industry, which has long surpassed the growth of English news dailies. He added, with increasing literacy and a rapid growth in the aspirant of mid-income household in Tier 2 and 3 towns and cities, advertisers are keen to capture their attention and mind space. Although this has resulted in a spurt in demand for regional language newspapers, Hindi continues to be a preference and is well poised for tremendous growth.” \textsuperscript{12}

Niyazi (2010) states that Hindi media is not only confined to north India but has penetrated other parts of India too. The Hindi speakers, 40.22 per cent of India’s population, reveals the importance of Hindi as India’s \textit{lingua franca}. Mentioned in \textit{afaqs reporter’s} special report (2013) Mandir Tendolkar, vice president, Lokmat Media, says, “It works just like


Bollywood movies. Although films are being produced in other languages, Hindi movies are the first choice of the audience. Emerging rural markets are playing an important role in the growth of Hindi print, where a newspaper is not only a source of information, but leads to a lot of discussion as well.”

Madhya Pradesh, which has the most promising market for Hindi print media, has witnessed a significant rise in print activity. Janardhan Pandey, Business Director, Mudra Max says, "MP is getting prominent year by year, more over with the boost in the economy the stakes are high now, particularly in Bhopal and Indore. It will see major print activity in the coming 10 years. So if any Hindi publication is looking for readership boost it becomes very important market.”

The state has over 10 Hindi dailies present in the major cities which show differential leadership in each city. Most of them are present in capital and economic capital of the city, Bhopal and Indore respectively. Pandey further says, "When you look at the market most important cities are Bhopal and Indore so 60-70 per cent spends happens for these cities itself.”

It does have a significant work force and market value which requires a critical look to understand the nature and properties embedded in this structure. There are few women in these media organizations. This present Hindi media market has a historical presence in these four cities Bhopal, Indore, Jabalpur and Gwalior which have been analysed in the next section. It clearly shows that Hindi print journalism has strong-roots from the pre-independence period. I also focus on how the presence of women and their issues have been ignored despite having a historical and cultural base of Hindi journalism in these four cities.

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1.5 Historical Presence of Hindi Newspapers in Four Cities

Pankaj (2009) in his book published in Hindi Language “Hindi Patrakarita Ki Vikas Yaatra” (Growth of Hindi Journalism) documents the growth of Hindi journalism in different states in India. It captures the origin of Hindi journalism and various changing dimensions of journalism as the fourth state in our country.

Borrowing from his work I have listed out Hindi publication started in the four cities in Madhya Pradesh. I reflect that despite having a historical presence of Hindi print journalism, women in Hindi print media have been largely marginalized.

As per the work of Pankaj (2009) the list of Hindi newspapers in four cities is given below to understand the prominent existence of Hindi print journalism.

**Indore**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Navjeevan</td>
<td>Indore</td>
<td>1915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindi Sarvasv</td>
<td>Indore</td>
<td>1915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chandra Prabha</td>
<td>Indore</td>
<td>1915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhartiya Aadarsh</td>
<td>Indore</td>
<td>1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veena</td>
<td>Indore</td>
<td>1926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navjeevan</td>
<td>Indore</td>
<td>1939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kissan</td>
<td>Indore</td>
<td>1941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indore Samachar</td>
<td>Indore</td>
<td>1946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyaa Zamaana</td>
<td>Indore</td>
<td>1947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pukaar</td>
<td>Indore</td>
<td>1947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nai Dunia, Indore</td>
<td>Indore</td>
<td>1947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maalwa Akhbar</td>
<td>Indore</td>
<td>1849</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Bhopal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Praja Pukaar</td>
<td>Bhopal</td>
<td>1934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>Bhopal</td>
<td>1965</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Gwalior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gwalior Akhbar</td>
<td>Gwalior</td>
<td>1840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwalior Gazzett (later Gwalior State Gazzett since 1905)</td>
<td>Gwalior</td>
<td>1853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jayaji Pratap, Gwalior later in 1950 it was names as Madhya Pradesh Sandesh and in 1956 it was names as Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>Gwalior</td>
<td>1905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeevan, Gwalior</td>
<td>Gwalior</td>
<td>1939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bharti Gwalior</td>
<td>Gwalior</td>
<td>1954</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The first Hindi newspaper started in Gwalior in 1840 "Gwalior Akhbaar". The list captures the fact that the maximum number of Hindi newspapers is in Indore followed by Jabalpur, Gwalior and Bhopal.

This list is to trace the existence of Hindi newspapers. My effort is to identify the missing link between Hindi journalism and women. Women’s contribution has not been documented properly nor has there been any academic research on women in Hindi print media in Madhya Pradesh.

In the contemporary scenario, there are few challenges to the hierarchical character of Hindi print media. Large number of women are working in the media but they lack even

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jabalpur Samachar</td>
<td>Jabalpur</td>
<td>1873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shubh Chintak</td>
<td>Jabalpur</td>
<td>1883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aary Vanita</td>
<td>Jabalpur</td>
<td>1902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnveer</td>
<td>Jabalpur</td>
<td>1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaatra Sahodar</td>
<td>Jabalpur</td>
<td>1925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satya</td>
<td>Jabalpur</td>
<td>1930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lokmat</td>
<td>Jabalpur</td>
<td>1930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prema</td>
<td>Jabalpur</td>
<td>1930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachcho ki Duniyaa</td>
<td>Jabalpur</td>
<td>1940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paurush</td>
<td>Jabalpur</td>
<td>1941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jaihind</td>
<td>Jabalpur</td>
<td>1945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pradeep</td>
<td>Jabalpur</td>
<td>1950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navbharat</td>
<td>Jabalpur</td>
<td>1950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vasudha</td>
<td>Jabalpur</td>
<td>1956</td>
</tr>
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</table>
basic facilities like transport, maternity leave, childcare, healthy working environment like separate toilets and green room and equal access to decision making positions.

This thesis deals with the contemporary scenario capturing the lived experiences of women journalists working in Hindi print media. My research finds the presence and significance of Hindi print media in context of these four cities where I aim to understand the lived experiences of women journalists working in Hindi print media in these four cities.

Using a feminist lens, women journalists’ lived experiences are the core of this study revealing multiple intersectional socio-cultural realities. Entering through a lens of feminist line of inquiry gives a privileged standpoint to understand spatial-social location of Hindi print women journalists in these four cities of Madhya Pradesh.

1.6 Women in Journalism: A Global Perspective

Presence of women in journalism has been a historical fact world-over. F Elizabeth Gray (2012, p. 1) writes that nineteenth century got increasing number of prominent women in British journalism like never before materializing their own ways in varying journalism. Quoting Fraser (2003), Gray (2012, ed. p. 1), mentions that

‘… it was the fundamentally heterogeneous form of the Victorian periodical, its multiple and mostly anonymous authorship, its imperative of diversity, that provided a very particular space, both fluid and dynamic, in which women could negotiate a writing identity or writing identities.’

Participation of women in journalism demands a careful examination of periodical press too which Gray (2012, ed.) unravels in ‘Women in Journalism at the Fin de Siècle - Making a Name for Herself’. This anthology focuses on how women journalists by the twentieth century experienced multiple intersecting realities of gender with construction of cultural standards of women writers. It also enables us to understand the commodification of the self with a complex relationship that deals with fame and literary style. Pursuing literary passion in journalism, female journalists witness transforming
culture, gender and economic paradigms as their negotiations for name and recognition continue. Women journalists have similar challenges till date concerning their identity in this profession.

Gray (2012, ed. p. 2) quotes that “Martin Conboy suggests that the constraints limiting nineteenth-century women journalists linger into the twenty-first century: despite apparent advances, women continue mainly in the glamorous ghettos of journalism as opposed to the serious areas of news journalism.” The traditional binary between hard and soft beats kept women journalists limited and regulated at their choice of work in journalism. Growing mass-media has been strongly reinforcing traditional binary which construct hierarchy converting into sexual division of labour. Associating the professional worth according to socially constructed gendered work has been a significant operating power structure in journalism. Increasing professional standards and media market have developed more complex conditions in journalism demanding professional training as well.

Moreover, professional hierarchy retains vertical-order which eliminates women and their professional rights even when it comes to authorship and credit. Gray (2012, ed.) writes that professional experiences of women journalists include their negotiation with operating power relations of editors. Tammes (1980, p. 59) describes her personal account that

“In 1951, I was one of the first camerawomen to be accepted by the Association of Cinematograph Television and Allied Technicians (ACTT). Since then I have been working as a woman technician in the industry as a whole; it is perhaps easier to think about women as a minority group in the technical grades.”

This brings out the internal hierarchy within a media structure which excludes women as camerapersons to eventually overlooking their presence. Tammes (1980) argues that male technicians have a common belief that if a woman can do the job it loses its worth, whereas a male cameraman is seen as ‘macho’ and skilled. Tammes (1980) writes that it becomes unacceptable for the industry to have a woman as a cameraperson because it demeans men. Carter et al., (1998) argue that contemporary journalism was explicitly
gendered at multiple levels which also aimed towards women consumers as a target audience for their advertisers. It aimed at re-articulation of bourgeois definitions of ‘femininity’. The contemporary press was associated with traditional feminine invoking personalizing of information with sensation (Beetham, 1996; Carter and Thompson, 1997; Fry, 1929; Grieve, 1964; Head, 1939; Hunter, 1992; Knight, 1937; Leslie, 1943; Mills, 1990; Sebba, 1994 cited in Carter et al., 1998).

Beginning of the 1990s was announced as ‘The decade of Women’ in Britain (Carter et al., 1998). According to the demographic statistics in Britain it was observed that due to lack of enough graduates ‘the female factor’ became a significant factor to fulfill job requirement in media industries (Dougary 1994 cited in Carter et al., 1998). Wolseley (1943, p. 149, quoted in Steiner, 1998) states that journalists’ newly-won professionalism and celebrity status was visible as in the USA, around fifty journalists published their autobiographies between 1900 and 1934 which grew to double by next decade. Steiner (1998) informs that journalistic autobiographies revealed that press workers struggled with questions of identity and women were forced to work for extra hours in order to prove that they can work like men. Women have chosen to tell their stories through autobiographies revealing women’s powerlessness. She further describes that men define women in terms of sex as men not only want women to be feminine but also punish them for being feminine too at work. Women journalists’ biographies from British and US newspapers have supported that women who chose not to be feminine at work were seen as deviant category and those who remained feminine were pushed to the margins. Being feminine seems the most chronic barrier which never allowed a woman to be powerful in journalism.

Steiner (1998, p. 150) critically mentions Pierre Bourdieu and philosopher Michel Foucault about ‘the body as a practical site of social control’ whereas print journalists’ autobiographies in 1920, 1930s and 1940s explicitly described about gender/sex as a site of struggle without using the term ‘power’. Steiner elaborates that female autobiographies shy away from detailing power, ambition or participation in the public sphere (quoting Jelinek, 1980). Steiner (1980, p. 151) writes that ‘women famous as professionals refer only obliquely to their careers.’ Women journalists have been self-effacing and modest in
their autobiographies and there has been little mention of sexist treatment from colleagues and sources.

By now there has been significant increase in the number of women in journalism. Sebba (1994 cited in Carter et al., 1998) documents a variety of discriminations face by a number of women. Women newsworkers’ presence in the newsroom has fundamentally changed the types of sexist dynamics in the profession. Still women are not being promoted to senior decision-making positions which reinforces the glass-ceiling in journalism.


Geertsema (2009, p. 151) quotes Rodgers and Thorson (2003) that female reporters ‘drew upon a greater diversity of sources, stereotyped less, and wrote more positive stories than did male reporters.’ Whereas there have been critical arguments from scholar and media professionals regarding presence of women in journalistic workforce insisting that women do not have different news values than their male counterparts (Bleske, 1997; Schudson, 2003; Sebba, 1994 cited in Geertsema, 2009, p. 151).

Abraham (1988) writes that women journalists are able to bring a woman’s perspective as they can freely meet and talk to their women sources. Some of the best reporting on ethnic riots in Karanchi, Pakistan was done by women journalists. Being women, their accessibility and reach to women in slums and affected, helped to bring situations in public attention through media. Such reporting might have been considered less important by male journalists.

Van Zoonen (1998) informs that German women journalists narrated their experiences in journalism having a masculine ethic which they had to live with to be accepted as ‘real journalists’. Quoting Neverla and Kanzleiter (1984), Van Zoonen (1998) emphasizes that
high alcohol intake has been a prominent problematic issue among German male journalists. Experiencing ‘masculine’ culture of newsrooms, Dutch women journalists also shared that sexist jokes have been a prevalent reality for them (Diekerhof et al., 1985 cited in Van Zoonen 1998). Newsroom culture enunciates a common reality world over as women journalists experience such masculine workplaces. Research on female newspaper and television journalists’ world over revealed the same power order whether it is Norway, the Netherlands, Germany, United States of America (USA), India (Van Zoonen, 1998). The daily journalism consists of male-dominated hierarchy subordinating women journalists. These professional inequalities in journalism have a base of sexist and masculine decision-making processes which annihilate women professionals. Steiner (1998) argues that journalists’ encountering workplace power includes both the power to construct people as engendered and ignoring gender dynamics. Many experiences revealed highly gendered patterns existing in journalistic history. Steiner (1998) describes experiences of women journalists in the newsroom by raising questions on processes of choice of assignments, approaches to sources, editors’ hierarchy, ethical decision making, power-relations operating production of newswork, sexual harassment in the newsroom, under paid newsworker or placed as a token woman on staff. These have been the critical aspects of journalism in relation to gender which need investigation as newsroom trends continues to disempower reporters through hierarchical and bureaucratic newsroom culture. Journalists’ work has been standardized and mechanized because of technological innovation (Steiner, 1998).

Van Zoonen (1994) states that workforce in media which is a critical reality of gender neutrality needs a higher level of analysis and a scrutinized probe in journalistic structure. Research done in Western countries shows that definition of newsworthiness, styles-angles, professional norms and values describe the masculine nature of journalism (Creedon, 1989; Diekerhof et al., 1985; Gallagher, 1995; Neverla and Kanzleiter, 1984; Skard, 1989; UNESCO, 1987; van de Wijngaard, 1989; van Zoonen, 1989, 1994; van Zoonen and Donsbach, 1988 cited in Van Zoonen, 1998).

In relation to Middle East countries Sakr (2004, p. 3) critically writes that
“In the unusual environment of Saudi Arabia, degree courses in mass communications have not been open to women and rules against mixing of the sexes in public have had the effect of restricting women journalists to untenured jobs, with little prospect of promotion and an initially uncertain status in the nascent Saudi Journalists’ Association. Again, however, inequalities that are overt in the Saudi environment are not exclusive to Saudi Arabia. As will be shown below, journalists’ unions throughout the region have a poor record of representing women.”

Sakr (2004) critically notes that Margaret Gallagher’s work presents gender patterns in the world’s media elaborating on commercial interest of media. Gallagher’s book ‘Gender Setting’ presents media scene of African, Asian and Latin American countries but doesn’t really cover Middle East. Experiences of women journalists from different countries and geographies have been missing nuances of their cultural context. Also, a variety of experiences of women journalists have been overlooked in research brought to quantitative value. Low presence of women in journalism directly affects quality of news product and coverage thus male-view dominates news production.

Sakr (2004) argues that feminist theorists both from global North and global South have rejected essentialist notions of ‘woman’ or ‘Third World Women’. Sakr (2004, p. 7) quotes that

It is no longer fair to say, as it was in the early 1990s, that scholars treat western women as the norm and ‘Third world women as monolithically oppressed … den[y]ing the complexity of Third World women’s experience’

Acknowledgment of the complexities in women’s experience requires analytical approach tracing intersectional realities across different countries. Asserting the need for energy and emotion for any alternative approach to conventional power and structure of journalism, Steiner (1998) states that women as reporters questioned essentialist theories of womanhood and exceptionalist view about themselves in their autobiographies. Steiner (1998) states that women who have been working for mainstream media did not argue for any particular power (re)arrangement in the newsroom. Efforts from feminists and alternative media challenging hierarchical order have been less effective. Further Steiner
(1998) writes that diversity in newsrooms in terms of race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation indicate perhaps a democratic space.

In the South Asian context, Abraham (1988) writes that closely reflecting Indian English media, the Pakistani English media has also been employing more women. Only a small portion of elite society can have access to be a mediaperson writing for privileged society. Thus there is prevalent salary discrimination as newspapers’ employers exploit the fact that well-off women prefer their journalistic status more over salary. They too struggle with male-dominated regional media working for long-hours and find it difficult to make a career in journalism if a woman is from less privileged background. Abraham (1988) informs that in Bangladesh women and their significance in development are largely ignored issues in mainstream media.

Moving particularly towards Indian print journalistic scene brings less-researched women in Hindi print journalism. Despite having a growing media market and workforce it has not been theorized academically. Women journalists’ experiences have potential to be analysed for the explanation of the journalistic structure which function as a capitalist-patriarchal power center. Existing professional inequalities do not liberate women but further bind them with family obligations.

Understanding women journalists from their geographic location with their social-cultural realities demands explain the local power. Fiske (1993) states local power a process ‘bottom-up’ opposite to imposing power. It involves controlling of their immediate context and conditions with negotiation, resistance and protecting one’s own locale in a particular context. Negotiating with the structure of journalism women’s variety of experiences enunciate multiple intersecting realities world over which gives a picture of this gendered-profession of journalism.
1.7 Women in India Media: A Critical View

Studies have been done to capture presence of women in media mainly discussing about the representation of women in Mass media. Very little attention has been given to the women working in media as a part of its workforce. In context of Hindi Print media, Meena R. (1989) writes in her paper that Indian journalism is male dominated. The challenges faced by women are deeply related to Indian history and conservative mentality of society. Women are not considered equivalent to the image of even a journalist. Meena R.’s (1989) work is a major path breaking study, but it is not theoretical; rather it gives an insight into Hindi journalism in Madhya Pradesh. This work gives a broad picture of journalism and helps more to understand the gender inequalities particularly in Hindi journalism as Meena R. (1989) states that journalism makes women feel inferior while treating them as secondary. Her work still has profound relevance as Hindi journalism still has a low number of women journalists with unexplained social-cultural factors. She describes that women work as subordinate under high-positioned men in journalism.

She argues that society has portrayed woman as ‘abla’ or ‘incapable’, weak at logic thus unable to perform like a man. Division of work confines women to jobs like typist, receptionist, personal assistance. In journalism too women are given soft beats only like beauty parlour, fashion or interviews with actresses. Meena R. (1989) argues that women journalists’ situation is unjust in Madhya Pradesh in comparison to other states like Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamilnadu and West Bengal.

Her study reflects the inferior status of women in Hindi print media as she argues that despite having journalism departments in State Universities with a higher number of girls than boys, Hindi Journalism has low number of women journalists. In her work she writes that girls studying journalism do these courses in preference to doing nothing. She criticizes that despite having good writing skills women are not able to make progress due to lack of contacts. Because of certain upbringing and socialization women fail to make contacts for their professional growth. She added that the newspaper she works with in Madhya Pradesh has the largest circulation but still has only very few women journalists.
Meena R. (1989) writes that after independence due to industrial development many cities emerged and there was growth in literacy. There has been some impact of western culture making women coming out of their homes. She argues that men discourage women from entering journalism and create obstacles to prevent them. Here Meena R. (1989) does not detail what kind of hurdles is created by men to discourage women from entering journalism. But her work provides an overview of the situation prevailing in Hindi print media in journalism in Madhya Pradesh.

So far her brilliant work has never been mentioned anywhere in scholarship of women in Hindi journalism. Her work in itself opens up an area of scholarship on women and media which is completely owned by English elite class. This work produced by Meena R. (1989) almost 26 years ago could not be part of any concern regarding women in Hindi print media. It should be noted that in her work Meena R. (1989) mentions Mrinal Pande as the only women editor of ‘Saptahik Hindustaan’ a weekly published in Hindi from Delhi. Since then, till date, Mrinal Pande is the only face of Hindi journalism raises further questions about the missing women in Hindi print media and the existing hierarchy in it.

Fortunately, during my revised search for literature review I found this paper Meena R (1989) archived in the digital library of Nanyang Technological University Library, Singapore. I was surprised that such valuable piece of work has not been acknowledged in Indian media discourse on women in media. If I am not mistaken, her work is a pioneering work to question the character of media and also to point out a wide gap between English women journalists and Hindi women journalists. One needs to acknowledge that discourse on women in media in India which has been represented by English women journalists and has ignored issues and challenges faced by women journalists in vernacular media and Hindi print media too.

Anuja (2015) in her article written in Hindi ‘Mahila Patrakarita Ki Gahari Jadein’ or (Roots of Women Journalism) gives a historical account of women participating in journalism since pre-independence era. Her articles mention numerous newspapers and magazines run by women and many of these editions were short lived. It is a summarized article documenting presence of women in journalism specifically in English, Hindi,
Urdu, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Telugu language publications in Indian where women journalists have actively raised issues concerning women during freedom movement. Her work also informs briefly that women in journalism at the time of freedom movement raised issues of custodial rape, atrocities against women. With a descriptive account of women in journalism in her piece of writing lacks critical analysis of the inequalities between man and woman in journalism. Her work reflects the content of women newspapers and magazines which had voices of women evoking patriotism and nationalism.

Despite giving a broader picture of the then social conditions through a documentation of various women publication and their content this work is confined to the glorification of the presence of women in journalism. Her work concludes with the mention of Mrinal Pande as a prominent one in Hindi journalism. I can’t help being critical here about the uncritical mention of Mrinal Pande even after passing decades of Hindi journalism with major transformations. I question the limited analytical work done on Hindi journalism which is affected by stagnation and missing major debates in relation to women and media in Indian context especially in Hindi-speaking belt.

Moreover, if we take a look even at the work done by Meena R. (1989) and Anuja (2015), we find certain commonality of mentioning uncritical representation of Mrinal Pande in context of Hindi journalism and its power hierarchy. Interestingly, the time-period between both studies shows a gap of almost 25 years. It raises a few major questions: Is the discourse on women in media patronized by elite English class women journalist excluding Hindi woman journalists? Is there no other woman journalist worth mentioning other than Mrinal Pande to represent Hindi print media? Why there is dearth of scholarship on Hindi journalism despite having a strong presence in the vast Hindi-speaking belt? Why is there a gap of decades for women in Hindi journalism to be considered significant to be studied? Why is literature on women journalists in the form of biographic details rather than a critical analysis of the structure? Is Hindi print journalism inflicted by the glorification of regressive nationalist values and yet not enlightened?
Despite having many studies, problems and challenges remain the same and still there is lack of reasonable explanations on such professional inequality in Hindi media. It should be noted that the work done on Indian media scene still doesn’t cover important debates of Hindi journalism, their problems and challenges. Thus my research work tries to locate the hitherto unaddressed issues of Hindi print journalism from a gender point of view.

Shukla, (2001) in “Vindhya ki Patrakarita Ke Vividh Aayaam (Multiple Dimension of Journalism in Vindhya Region)” documents the contribution of Hindi Journalism during freedom struggle and to generate awareness among people through journalism. It particularly focuses on the Vindhya region or North region of Madhya Pradesh and growth of Hindi journalism in this area. This work also gives description about the prominent male journalists who have been working with Hindi print journalism since freedom struggle and also after independence. Interestingly, this work gives a history of the regional Hindi journalism at different districts of the Vindhya region. Featuring the revolutionary Hindi journalism against social evils at that period of time, this book highlights the work of journalists who have been raising issues of concern through Hindi Journalism. Shukla’s work glorifies Hindi Journalism and male journalists, recapturing the revolutionary contribution of Journalism.

This work gives an insight into the History of Hindi Journalism in North region of Madhya Pradesh. It provides a view of Hindi Journalism in North-region of Madhya Pradesh known as ‘Vindhya’ region which speaks about the revolutionary nature of journalism which doesn’t have description of women journalist of the period in Hindi print media.

Rama Jha (1992) raises the point that despite women being at the helm of affairs and decision-making positions, there is inadequate follow-up on issues related to women. However it is to be seen whether women are decisive in higher position in newsrooms or not? With the citation of interviews of prominent women journalists, it came to light that development issues are vitally linked with political issues. But it is unfortunate that the kind of reporting which is done establishes no link between the two. In the arena of news beats, political beats are favored over women’s issues.
All interviewed journalists in Rama Jha’s (1992) study are from well-known English newspapers and describe the realities of English news media. Such kind of work could provide an analytical understanding of Hindi media too. She argues that during early decades of entry of women journalists in 70s-80s, through the experiences of women journalists from English print media it was noticed that economic and political beats were a lucrative sphere to be joined by women as these have been the bastion of men. More than almost 20 years later my research suggests that women journalists are still restricted to certain beats with the traditional binary of hard versus soft beats.

Ammu Joseph’s work (2000) is a widely talked study describing plight of women work force in print media. Her work, while covering experiences of women journalists and their professional challenges depicts the treatment given to women journalists in print media. She herself does not subscribe to the hierarchies of ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ news which makes her arguments quite different from Rama Jha’s (1992) study that focuses on the stereotyping of jobs for women in media. It can be the difference of period because both studies have their own relevance as Rama Jha’s (1992) work covers earlier decades of women journalists’ struggles whereas Ammu Joseph’s (2000) work deals with a large number of working women by then in print media.

This study is an exploration of the world of Indian print media through eyes of women situated at different points in the profession while explaining the women-work force experience in print media. Joseph’s (2000) work deals with the practical aspects of the profession in the form of limitation and discrimination. Joseph points out that content, style, and emphasis of the press in the 1990’s is remarkably different from what was prevalent in the preceding decades as now commercial pressure determines the nature of the press. She argues that most women in journalism in India belong to the upper caste and class and other relatively privileged communities. She suggests that deliberate and sustained efforts are required to ensure that more women from disadvantage communities- Dalits, Adivasis, religious and ethnic minorities are enabled to participate in the profession.
A survey study on ‘Status of Women Journalists in Print Media’ (2004)\textsuperscript{16} has been conducted by Press Institute of India commissioned by National Commission for Women. This study reveals that women in regional-vernacular press are lagging far behind their colleagues in the English language press. It also found out that level of awareness about basic working conditions is very low on some key issues and facing constant job insecurity. This study has brought out stark realities of the profession and discrimination faced by women journalists. Interestingly, this survey has covered a wide geographical presence of Print media in almost all states and Union territories in India. According to the report a total of 410 women journalists responded and filled the questionnaire. Their experiences echo the same rigidity of the print media structure which ultimately discourages women from being in the profession.

This study (2004) has been a major indicator of the status of women in print media. It is a kind of survey report which provides statistics and numerical data on status of women in print media which basically declares policy recommendations to ameliorate the situation for women in print media. This work lacks critical and in depth description of social and cultural barriers which women face. This survey report has covered experiences of women journalists regarding marriage, maternity and domestic responsibilities as challenges to continue with their journalistic job.

According to this report (2004) in Madhya Pradesh there is no concept of women having permanent jobs. Those who are lucky work on contract having calculative job security for certain period of time. The report further states that women work without having any formal appointment letters or designations which really make their position weak even to negotiate their rights at workplace. Thus women are hired and fired at the wish of management abruptly. In most of the cases management reasons termination of a woman’s job ranging from downsizing or asking a woman ‘can you justify what you have

\textsuperscript{16} Government Report on Status of Women Journalists in India (2004). This study was executed by the Press Institute of India (PII) and commissioned by National Commission for Women (NCW), through empirical data that was collected from almost all the States and Union Territories of the country. Link \url{http://ncw.nic.in/pdfreports/status\%20of\%20women\%20journalists\%20in\%20india.pdf} accessed on May 7, 2016.
been doing for last few months’. Even payment has been by using muster rolls or voucher system. This has been substantiated in my study own study done nearly a decade later.

In this report (2004) Hindi print media is not separately given that much importance. Rather it is covered under the section on print media. It is to be noticed that since this study was conducted, years have passed, opportunities and competition have increased but still women journalists are at the disadvantaged end with many similar issues at workplace including job insecurity, unequal pay, work-discrimination, unsafe workplace, denied promotion and stereotyping.

At global level a major study was conducted in 2005, known as Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP). This study was co-coordinated by World Association for Christian Communication (WACC), an international NGO that promotes communication for social change. This study was conducted in 76 countries across the globe. The GMMP report (2005) provides rigorous data on ‘Who makes the news’ in different countries which is helpful to understand the domination of men as newsmakers. Thus women are noticeably underrepresented in media. According to the GMMP report, women’s point of view is rarely considered for the topics which dominate the news agenda in media. Women are assigned mainly womanly issues. It also reveals that for women, age matters and their growing age make them disappear from being news presenters. The report finds that news on gender equality and inequality is almost non-existent and news reports use gender stereotyped language.

Certainly the data provided by GMMP (2005) reveals significant facts but it is important to understand the presence and constrains of women in Media from a sociological point of view. This helps to understand better the processes behind the exploitive nature of media. This is the limits in the report. This report gives a rich data on news on women as news makers as homogenized category world over. It also demands contextual dealing to

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17 The Global Media Monitoring Project is the largest and longest longitudinal study on the representation of women in the world’s media. It is also the largest advocacy initiative in the world on changing the representation of women in media. It is unique in involving practitioners, all of whom participate on a voluntary basis.
understand the social and cultural constructions responsible for discriminatory gender relations in media of particular geographical location.

Taking forward the research on gender and media the GMMP (2010) finds out in Indian context that women are not proportionately represented in media thus there is gender imbalance. Certain small categories of women have over-representation whereas a larger category remains under-represented. This report also shows that news content has male-centric view and many issues which are of significance to women’s lives are not considered as news worthy and are sidelined.

GMMP India (2010, p. 18) reports that

“Stereotypes about women and men abound in the media. While some stereotypes are fairly universal—for example, women are generally perceived to be non-ambitious, irrational, fragile and dependent while men are usually regarded as ambitious, rational, strong and independent—many others are culture-specific.

GMMP 2010 overwhelmingly found that gender stereotypes continued to prevail in a major way in all media. Nearly two thirds (63 per cent) of the news stories from the Indian media that were analysed were found to reinforce gender stereotypes while only 9 per cent challenged them. 73 per cent of the stories on crime and violence reinforced gender stereotypes, but so did 72 per cent of the stories on science and health, 62 per cent of the stories on the economy, 60 per cent of the stories on celebrities, arts, media and sports, and 59 per cent of the stories on social and legal issues. Almost 87 per cent of the stories on religion, culture and tradition (which fell under the broad theme of social-legal) also reinforced stereotypes.”

It establishes that men outnumbered women in difference categories of news stories. Men report more than women which results in unfair portrayal of gender issues in news media. Reflecting the under-representation of the women in media coverage and their low presence shows gender imbalance with an imbalance in the news. It is a monitoring approach of the report which traces the ongoing changes happening in media but lacks the arguments as what could be the reasons which have made women to walk on tight rope while working with media. This report does not provide a clear insight on workplace and experiences of women journalists. This report involves the metropolitan cities in very urban contexts whereas women working in other vernacular media face different set of
challenges which need to be explored more specifically through a critical gender lens to understand Hindi print journalism.

Study on ‘Images of Women in Print Media: a Research Inquiry’ (2006) finds that women journalists working in English print media do not face discrimination because of their gender and there is no gender division of labour. The same study includes narratives from male journalists working in Gujarati vernacular media. These narratives state that the number of women in vernacular media is less since the working environment is not conducive for women. This study also finds that in vernacular press there are barriers and limitations for women and their career growth. Male journalists are considered superior and women are confined to soft beat assignments. The study also brings out that gender does not confirm suitability of the person in journalism as sometimes even male journalists are not able to handle situations like ‘riots’. This study mentions that “hazards of professional work are man-made and man borne.” Also the coverage of women’s issues is given less importance and women’s issues are stereotyped. But this work does not analyse various responsible factors at length and lack theoretical explanations in critical manner. It finds mixed narratives from male and female journalists which lacks analytical aspects on caste and other social cultural subjectivities.

An MA dissertation titled ‘In the Silences of a Newsroom’ (2013) by Nithila Kanagasabai also unravels the unspeakable realities of English media newsroom which argues that the newsroom is increasingly becoming a site of mythical celebratory postfeminist narratives. In her dissertation she examines the spatiality and sociality of the gendered newsroom engaging with the lived knowledge of women journalists and newsroom patriarchy. Her work also focuses on women journalists working with English media located in metro cities thus it promisingly brings out the location of women and their challenges in urban journalism. Also, English media’s newsroom architecture has been an interesting part of the politics of work place which reveals a material relationship with female body at workplace. It is an important work which critically describes newsroom patriarchy in the Indian context with certain material changes and their relationship with the women intersecting identities at workplace. Tracing the relationship with the changing spatiality
is an important aspect of her study which proficiently illustrates how space is a key factor to regulate freedom and fear of a woman in the newsroom.

Her study provides complexities of a gendered location in the newsroom and highlights that legal resource to issues of sexual harassment cannot be enough to ensure equality at newsroom whereas it requires understanding socio-cultural factors to deal with gender discrimination.

The study *Zile ki Hulchul* (Stir in Districts, 2014), conducted by a rural newspaper *Khabar Lahariya*, is a brilliant work which documents experiences of women journalists of small towns and districts in North India. This survey was conducted in four states of North India which are Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Bihar. This study reveals how commercialization and proliferation of media has an impact in Hindi hinterland and whether journalism has become as an acceptable profession for women who are working in small towns and district outside big metros. This study is a prominent work which captures women journalists’ life stories and journalistic experiences of reporting from far-flung locations in Hindi speaking belt and their negotiation of the structure and economics of media. This study purely deals with the district-level small towns’ women journalists working in peri-urban or rural areas focusing mainly on alternative media in regional or Hindi media. Highlighting the experiences of women working in urban areas covering cities Lucknow, Bhopal, Jaipur and Patna, this study reveals that women face discrimination as compared to women in English journalism and office spaces are male-dominated. Women journalists in Bhopal pointed out the discriminatory treatment from male colleagues.

This study (2014) reports that despite having an active press club in Bhopal, women journalists never get together to discuss the issues faced by all including situations like job insecurity which make women’s voices weaker. Women journalists in Jaipur echoed about the incidents of sexual harassment and beat-stereotyping which was also mentioned by women in Patna. Need for networking among women journalists was a commonly raised issue. Detailing the district-level-small town reporters’ experiences, this study finds that women in journalism mostly belong to the upper castes since the women are required to be independent and enter the public sphere. This study reveals the struggles
and negotiations of these women navigating through districts, villages, towns, male spaces, institutions and colleagues. It brings out the hard-working life side of them which certainly shows no comforts of big-city journalists. It defines what it means to be ‘local’. It makes a woman not a reporter, neither a woman reporter but a ‘local reporter’. This study unravels that women reporters establish themselves locally and build social capital through their own networking which emerge as gender liberation. Capturing the poorly-paid plight of the village or small-town women reporters as combination of social factors, expectations, ups and downs made this profession financially insecure.

This study brings out breaking the hard and soft beat divide as women in small town and districts reported on crime and political beat with a grip on the issues in their areas. Also labeling their gender identity becomes a critical aspect in their work as it determines how they are seen by people. Being women reporters or the only woman reporter in a small town makes them hyper-visible in the area which further affects their clothing, interaction, mobility. This study reveals that how women sometimes hold on to their gender identity or sometimes dissociate from a gender label choosing a pragmatic professional identity. Incidents of sexual harassments are there but never reported due to fear of losing job.

This study focusing on Hindi hinterland’s small town women journalists gives a rich account of the alternative media where women are working outside the structure of mainstream media. Their reporting covers more of their own regional geographic issues challenging the mainstream media’s conventional work style dealing with currentness serving to class-readership. Strengthening ‘impact media’ through covering and following up issues promises a desired alternative media too through these women working in small town media. This study is remarkable to understand agency of these women, limitations and possibilities for them in journalism which are specifically contextualized to women working in peri-urban, rural, district or small towns of Hindi heartland.

Another report published by the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ, March, 2015) informs about challenges women face at professional front as their rights as a professional are least recognized like child care facilities, leave and reentry provisions are
at minimal level. Rather than considering issues of women journalists, employers prefer to keep women from the workforce. According to this report (2015) women journalists’ union have been making efforts to seek attention for their professional rights but it seems losing their roles as young journalists do not show much interest to take part for the common voices. For India’s growing media landscape unions should be more actively changing their perceptions to add more to improve women journalists’ status.

The IFJ report suggests that there is need for gender equity policies in media which includes ILO maternity/paternity leave conventions and Health and safety audits, pay audits followed by a sexual harassment policy, flexible work options, an equal opportunity or gender equity policy and a dignity at work policy. This survey report includes metropolitan cities majorly in which it is clear that little more than half respondents belong to Delhi and nearby township as Delhi has a large number of media organizations and journalists. This survey majorly focuses on journalists in relatively big cities with state capitals. The report reveals more about the workplace conditions reflecting over the caste and religion of the journalists with poor representation of Dalits in media. IFJ report also finds well educated journalists having post-graduation or doctoral (PhD) degree working in this field. This report gives a rich account on the professional status of women working with media who still face gaps to receive their professional rights. This report suggests women journalists require safety training, safe workplace environment, better professional benefits regarding leaves and promotion, it largely brings the issues women journalists face while working with media.

The IFJ (2015) is a well-refined survey report which is urban centric and gives a generalized picture about the media organization and women journalists in Indian metro cities which have comparatively better facilities than those in less developed states.

The purpose of my study is specifically looking at Hindi print journalism through the lived experiences of women journalists. The purpose of this research work is to intensively capture the nature of Hindi print journalism and how women locate themselves. I also focus on how they are battling with power structures negotiating with prevailing masculine definitions of profession, womanhood, femininity and workplace experience.
1.8 Theoretical Framework and Conceptual Themes

1.8.1 Introduction

This research has been discussed under certain theoretical framework and conceptual themes which allow shaping discussion of lived experiences of women journalists. Examination of lived experiences of women journalists working in Hindi print journalism in four cities of Madhya Pradesh have been analysed under Gender, Feminist Geography, Gendered Work place, Division of labour and Hindi Nationalism and gender framework and conceptual themes. These theoretical concepts have been employed to describe the multiple structured hierarchies which women journalists have been experiencing in their spatial-socio-cultural context. Gender and feminist geography assist to understand the relationship between city-spaces and women in accessing their social-spatial realities. It enables us to analyse how the space is also a social-gendered production which excludes women. Understanding workplace and work-assignment through workplace theories and division of labour help to examine the hierarchical nature of journalistic workplace and how it reinforces the dominant sexual division of labour subordinating women. Further theoretical framework discusses Hindi print journalism through the lens of nationalism and gender. It elaborates how women and language are used as vehicles for promoting nationalism and conventional values. These theoretical frameworks have given a direction to the process of understanding location of women journalist and their narratives in Hindi print journalism in Madhya Pradesh.

1.8.2 Gender

Gender is everywhere in everyday life. Socialization process allocates sex specific tasks to man and woman also with different sets of expectations from them. To understand the ‘gender’ we need to closely see our daily life which divides man and woman in binary declaring man powerful and woman as subordinate to man. The male-superiority is constructed through his roles as a decision-maker and head of the family and woman as
his subordinate obeying his rule while controlling her life. Gender is the main category which is very much in practice to regulate the roles and behavior of the man and woman.

Gender is an important category to understand the social relations as man and woman are perceived by their socially constructed roles and tasks. Ridgeway (2009) cited in her work that in 1987, while analyzing gender as a social interactional accomplishment, West and Zimmerman (Fenstermaker and West, 2002; West and Zimmerman, 1987) actually shook up the world of gender theorizing in sociology. They argued the difference that gender is what one “does” rather than “is” which has brought a new perspective with much persuasion. Gender is part of a stratification system which is operated through gender difference rationalizing gender roles and hierarchy (Rhode 1997). Gender as a category provides an understanding towards the existing social relations maintaining hierarchy between man and woman. It also gives a view to see how it is socially constructed and reinforced through practices, social norms and values. Accordingly, gender stereotypes are common beliefs about how most people view the typical man or woman (Eagly and Karau, 2002; Fiske, 1998; Fiske et al., 2002, cited in Ridgeway, 2009).

Judith Butler (1990) says that sex/gender distinction is unintelligible. Butler (1990) argues that unitary gender notions fail at recognizing multiplicity of cultural, social and political intersections which basically construct ‘women’. Butler writes that woman can never be defined without prescribing some ‘unspoken normative requirements like having a feminine personality’ which a woman should be conforming. She strongly criticizes gender while asserting that gender is an illusion maintained by power structure and there are no essential properties for man and women. Butler (1990) emphasizes that individuals are “intelligible genders”, gender is performative and it is not a stable identity. According to her gender is not something one is, it is something one does. She critically points out that if gender is cultural meaning assumed by the sexed body then gender cannot be said following from a sex in any one way. Considering its logical limit it finds a radical discontinuity between sexed bodies and culturally constructed genders. Butler (1990) establishes that when theorization of constructed nature of gender is done radically independent of sex, gender
becomes a free floating artifice. Thus she argues for gender performativity suggesting that gender is not an essential category.

It is important to specifically understand gender in the Indian context too. For that we need to consider the society and its structure which reveals the hierarchical order based on caste system in India. Chakravarty (2004, cited in V Geetha, 2002), in her essay ‘Conceptualizing Brahmanical Patriarchy in Early India’ argues that patriarchy in Indian context needs to be located in its relationship with other existing structures within a historical context. She argues further that gender roles and identities emerge from social context of caste society and also forms this hierarchy of caste. It is the extreme expression of the Hindu society legitimizing subordination of women and lower castes.

Chakravarty (2002) writes women belonging to the wealthy families or own land are confined to housework. Their sexuality, evocative reverence and fear came to be seen as wild which needs to be controlled by husbands. Such guarding of a woman means her sexuality should be channelized into legitimate motherhood through a strict structure of reproduction and patrilineal succession. Control of a woman is executed through coercion and consent, conversion by husband as King’s law or priest’s dictum as she consented to her own moral guard. Her moral values are taken as her ‘Dharma’ to stay within the limits of chastity. This creation of patriarchy makes woman subordinate to a man and she has nothing on her own whereas through patriarchy women are convinced to see themselves as of a greater virtue than what their nature allows them.

In the Indian context, gender is performed through caste-system and its social norms. In my study the framework speaks about the hierarchical gender relations which make the Hindi journalism a social site of reproducing the social system. The concept of Brahmanical Patriarchy helps to understand the existing nature of gender relations through lived experiences of women journalists which reveals the patriarchal character of Hindi Print journalism. The brahmanical patriarchy is based on the sexual division of labour which divides work of man and woman based on their social roles and identities. Thus men are bread-winner, owner and women are for household work.
In the Indian social context, understanding patriarchy begins with the understanding of caste in every possible level of society which decides role and location of women in society. Brahmanical Patriarchy is a set of rules and institutions in which caste and gender are linked while shaping each other and thus women are crucial to maintain the brahmanical patriarchal boundaries between castes (Chakravarty 2003). Mohanthy (2004) writes that gender is linked to class and caste. In the course of history evolution of class and caste took place constructing power-relations in which men performed a critical role in production system and achieved power. Mohanthy (2004) writes that women as a weaker entity has been a cultural and ideological statement as patriarchal norms have been in practice in society.

In context of this study, understanding Hindi print media from gender framework is a significant approach to analyze the nature of gender relations in the backdrop of Madhya Pradesh. The narratives from women journalists echo their lived experiences and highlight certain patriarchal characters of Hindi print Journalism.

1.8.3 Feminist Geography

Feminist geographers have become interested to understand women’s lives in different cultural places. City as a ‘space’ is an important aspect to understand ambiguities engaged in it especially when women access them unlike men. The geography of the space is not something in abstract but carries certain socio-cultural meaning. Elizabeth Wilson (2001) cited in Maksudyan (2014) describes the urban as a space of opportunity for women, despite having difficulties, city is such a space which emancipate women in comparison to rural or suburban domesticity. Though, being in city, urban experiences, life chances and well-being are affected by normalization of a patriarchal gender regime and hegemonic masculinity.
According to MacDowell (1999) geographers now arguably put forth that places are contested, fluid and uncertain. Places are defined by socio-spatial practices. Consequently, places overlap and intersect with multiple changing boundaries, constituted and continued by social power relations and exclusion (Massey, 1991; Smith, 1993 cited in MacDowell 1999, p. 4). In elaboration, power relations are the key to construct places and their rules to define boundaries as both social and spatial in order to further define who belong to the place and who may be excluded. It also definitely constructs the location and site of experience.

Massey (1994) writes that geography does matter in construction of gender and geography is an important part in the production and reproduction for both imaginative geographies and uneven development. Massey (1994) argues that gender and the fact of spatial variation in gender relations are a vital component to understand the organization and reorganization of the national economic space. Massey (1994, p. 181) critically brings out that “construction of place is articulated consideration of patriarchal relations.” The considered nature of ‘capitalism’ and ‘patriarchy’ is of equal power in structuring gender- relations.

The approach of feminist geography gives perspective to look at the space and geographical settings from a critical point of view which actually highlights the male dominance in the space and unfriendliness with the women because of social spatial boundaries.

Raju (1991) writes that in India considering women as a subject for study in geography emerged as part of a wide range of issues of social geography. Tracing the patterns of social and economic characteristics of Indian population depicts an inter and intra-regional as well as gender disparities existing among castes, communities and religious group. Raju (1991) argues that existing gender-disparities have been observed in Haryana and Punjab located in the northern sociocultural space in India which depicts their deviant behavior. Changing regional-cultural norms related to females and their treatment in society is a significant aspect which has been ignored in research in geography and there is no trace of spatial/regional explanations on gender-issues coming from non-

Contextualizing city spaces and women, Phadke et al., (2011) argue how women are not allowed to access public spaces and how they take risk for going out in public. For women ‘loitering’ is never allowed and seen as an act of accessing city spaces for their pleasure unlike men. Women never question their right to access public places in the city. Safety is a common concern which usually keeps women from accessing city spaces like streets, gardens, parks. The relation between space and gender in a city like Mumbai which is universally accepted as a safe city unfolds existing spatial-access inequalities among different class of women.

In the case of my research, the experiences women journalists’ lived depict a picture of their relationship with the particular city which provides an understanding of space in context of their freedom and safety. It emerges as an interesting aspect of the study which links the gendered space and its ambiguities to see women as transgressing space which is supposedly possessed by and belong to men. Working as a journalist, women find the city as a site of exploration and freedom. Relating professional experiences to certain geography helps to understand the subjectivities engaged from a feminist geography point of view. This theoretical approach helps to understand the city and its limits and boundaries through lived experiences of women working as a journalist.

1.8.4 Gendered Workplace

Media workplace is generally about news reporting, meeting deadlines and bringing it out to people. There is a pervasive culture of gendering the work, tasks, control of women and their freedom at workplace while following the social order of gender. Acker (2009) writes that women are still under represented in top professional positions and ‘Glass-ceiling’ is the metaphor to elaborate the inequalities produced because of gender. The low presence of women in organization does find gender barriers in operation which discourages women from being in higher positions.
While highlighting the missing critical debate on gender in organization Acker (1990) argues that there have been studies of the labour process (Braverman, 1974; Knights and Willmott, 1985 cited in Acker, 1990) focused on control, power, exploitation and methods as how these relations can be changed did ignore women and showed insensitivity towards implication of gender for their own objectives. She further critically mentions that when it comes to work democracy, organizational exploitation which is a feminist concern are under-studied (Rothschild, 1987; Rothschild-Whitt, 1979 cited in Acker, 1990).

Examining a journalistic workplace from feminist perspective brings to the fore the workplace hierarchies and different power structures which are often not seen in the name of gender neutrality in the organization. My research work aims at understanding the professional implications coming along with the women’s negotiation while working in journalism which is a structure having certain organizational goals and motives too. Apart from social hierarchies, the creation of organizational hierarchies is a more structured form of women’s oppression and exploitation because organizational goals promote larger perspective over individual professionals.

Elaborating on the debate over gender neutrality in organizations, Acker (1990) mentions that it is an obstacle to the feminist perspective on organizations because organizations uncritically endorse gender-neutral approach. It is really difficult to see gender in male dominated workplace and occupation because the men decide and represent the human, organization and progression. Many a times when it is considered that women and men, both are affected by organization in a different way, mostly it is argued that organization’s gender-neutral approach has been contaminated by gendered attitudes and behavior.

The structural operation of the gender-neutrality definitely turns a blind eye towards the sexual and gendered hierarchies in operation and it makes the structure asexual (Acker 1990). It has been a larger missing reality in workplace studies. Acker (1990)
acknowledges that organizational theory is blind to sexuality which is why it does not provide any gateway to critically understand the gender domination. MacKinno (1982) cited in Acker (1990) argues that there is sexual domination of women which is embedded within organizations never discussed in mainstream debates.

Organizational approach towards sexual harassment is further rejected under gender neutrality which ignores the gender power relations and attempts to ignore the unsafe environment at workplace. On the basis of a broad analysis of legal cases, MacKinnon (1979) emphasizes that the willingness of tolerating incidents of sexual harassment is often a condition of the job, both a result and reason of gender hierarchy which regards men as more powerful.

The masculine workplace responds to the presence of women with more male sexuality which Hear and Parkin (1987) quoted in Acker (1990) states that male sexual images infuse certain metaphors and language in organization which is taken as helpful for work activities and assignments. According to Collinson, 1988; Hearn and Parkin 1987 (cited in Acker (1990) such symbolic expression of male sexuality are used as a controlling mechanism within work limits for male workers simultaneously encouraging them for cohesion or as a stress release.

Bhadra (2011) writing on Indian women’s presence in medicine informs that culture of medicine has been a historical process shaped and reinforced through exclusion of women from medical specialties. Almost a hundred year ago the major challenges for Indian women were to enteri medical education which now has turned into earning equality in medical profession. Male-dominated profession shows exclusion of women professionals reinforcing gendered hierarchy. Patel (2008) argues that working in call centre industry with high-income, high-tech job does not lead to empowerment for women. Call centers’ workplaces are considered as a “sexy space” labeling women workers as bad girls. Patel (2010) argues for the temporal and physical mobility of women working in call centre industry in India.
Singh et al., (2005) elaborating on women’s working in Call centre’s workplace describe that working during odd hours shifts has emerged as new phenomena in Indian socio-economic contexts. It has psychological and sociological barriers affecting people working in call centres. Singh et al., (2005) question whether monetary rewards in these jobs compensate for the struggles and the adjustment of women working in this non-traditional industry. Working in call centres affects women’s health as they work against the biological clock finding difficult to balance work and family life. Also, very few women attain to higher managerial positions.

The journalistic workplace is also male-dominated and women find themselves excluded due to such symbolic expression of male sexuality. In context of my study this framework helps to understand the nature of male dominance over women who are part of the workplace. Their day to day negotiation with the workplace power relations and their forms of resistances are reflected upon in this dissertation.

1.8.5 Division of Labour

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. Byerly and Ross (2006) argue that the ways in which media represents the female subjects and the experiences of women working in media organizations themselves are the product of world system of patriarchal capitalism. Hindi media is also a structure which has different forms of hierarchies starting from division of labour at every level of its functioning under socially constructed binaries of gender.

This study aims at analyzing the division of labour and gender-relations in Hindi print media. It is very important to consider division of labour in print-media which indicates key interrelationships in our society with media. The division of labour between man and woman has been hierarchical in society which has constructed woman as an inferior social category. It is significant to understand the distribution of work among journalists at their work place and how is it being influenced or reinforced as per constructed social roles of women and men in society.
Byerly and Ross (2006) critically mention that gender issues are intensely embedded and remain an invisible side of the restructuring which has been taking place in news and other media industries in today’s global media scenario. The small presence of women working in senior positions in media is not the case only in news media but also with media industry. While indicating the transformation in media Byerly and Ross (2006) write that changes in media and communication with global nature of mass media have forced us to reconsider the relationship of media to gender.

Abott et al., (2005) write that labour is gendered defining women’s work and men’s work. The sexual division of labour is embedded not only in relationship between men and women but also in racial and ethnic differences, in the system of age stratification, in social class and further more. Society finds cooking, mothering, caring as women’s work. Ann Oakley (1982) quoted in Abott et al., (2005) says that sexual division of labor is socially constructed and not based on natural biological differences thus jobs become identified as man’s work or women’s work. Wharton (2005) state that sexual division of labour is a process that assigns tasks on the basis of sex and such a division of labour is fundamental to express sex distinction in social institutions. It has been argued that sex and age have been the oldest forms of division of labour in society.

Understanding Indian society requires knowing existing caste hierarchy. Desai et al., (2004) writes that caste system determines the social divisions of labour also dominantly regulating sexual division of labour. It controls that certain tasks are to be done only by women and particular tasks by men. Strictly reinforcing the dominant order of society, physical mobility is controlled through caste system. Women from lower castes are accessible to men of higher caste whereas men from lower caste have to face severe violence if they dare to access women from higher caste (Das, 1981; Desai, 1984 cited in Desai et al., 2004).

The low status of women in society is reinforced through linking women and Shudras together (Desai et al., 2004) which shows how caste and gender are deep-rooted. Desai et al., (2004) write that the caste based hierarchy not only legitimizes feudal relations of production but also justifies subordination of women in society. Geetha (2002) writes that explanations of gender show that masculinity and femininity are not eternal but both are
given norms. They have been made to appear eternal justifying gendered power-relations having ultimate authority of man. These power relations are in operation through various levels of economic, social, sexual and physical reinforcing men as superior and women as inferior-dependent category.

This study intends to understand whether in journalism the allocation of work is done on the basis of social division of labour between man and woman. Also it further enquires the nature of print journalism to understand other existing power hierarchies in execution in this profession.

1.8.6 Hindi Nationalism and Gender

Claiming Hindi as national language is part of the visible politics of the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP). This is seen recently in the 10th World Hindi Conference (WHC) which was organized in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. It was a three-day event from 10 September to 12 September, 2015 followed by ‘Hindi Diwas’ (Hindi Day) which is celebrated on September 14 every year. The clear objective of this conference was to endorse Hindi at global level through education, media, NGOs and all possible institutionalized methods to promote Hindi. It is a rigorous effort showing Hindi and its use for nationalism has been an active political agenda. Propagating nationalism through Hindi, as Anderson (1991, p. 4) argues that “world’s multiple significations, nation-ness, as well as nationalism are cultural nationalism are cultural artifacts of particular kind.” He argues that media and language also create imagined communities through ‘print capitalism’ targeting mass audience to spread the idea of nationalism. Anderson (1991) describes that capitalists printed books and media in vernacular language while maximizing circulation across different groups thus a common discourse became possible to emerge making first European nation-state around “national-print-languages”.

Orsini (2002, p. 4-5) writes that the colonization of north India in the course of the nineteenth century brought not only English as new elite language, but also English-educated Bengalis as government servants and professionals. In the period the spread of

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education among women and increasing growth of the press, theatre and literature in Bengal gives evidence to their advanced ‘state’ making the Hindi-speaking areas distinctly backward. It was on this contested terrain that Hindi started emerging as a print language spreading use of Hindi by Hindi organizations. It was the time when Hindi writers asserted their authority. Orsini (2002) informs that between 1920 and 1940 Hindi received much attention and it was able to claim status as the national language for the whole of India. It cannot be ignored that Hindi was competing within the linguistic hierarchy, but yet it comes below English.

The sense of national consciousness among people has been associated with Hindi especially in the states where Hindi predominates over all vernacular languages. In context of Madhya Pradesh, I would like to mention that Hindi prevails and is internalized unanimously as ‘Rashtrabhasha’ or national language.

Alok Rai (2007, p. 1-10) writes

“The crystallization of the self-consciousness of the Hindi belt intelligentsia, and the related making of the tributary stream of Hindi nationalism-which is related to, but not identical with Hindu nationalism are deeply consequential processes, even if, and are particularly when, they are not given due recognition, proper cognizance. These must be brought into consciousness, worked through and not repressed, if they are not to continue leaking their poisons into the body politic.”

The need to define a national language has been a quest in Indian context by nationalists. This effort has been politically motivated through institutionalized endorsement of Hindi to claim it as language of the Indian nation. Indian nationalists’ politics has been trying to revisit cultural roots of India through projecting Hindi as a national language whereas Constitution declares Hindi as a first official language not as a national language.

Hindi newspapers are perceived playing important role in shaping public opinion to give voice to the people whereas many scholars find Hindi newspapers participating in the rise of communal and identity politics in India thus its role in democratization is doubted (Hasan, 1998; Rajagopal, 2001, quoted in Niyazi, 2010).
For Hindi-belt, the challenge and responsibility both stem from their own social hierarchy which has a strong base of patriarchal society.

Alok Rai (2007, p. 2-3) elaborates

“In one sense, certainly, Hindi – the matter of Hindi – is merely a symptom of a wide range of social distress, a shorthand way of naming and focusing several different kinds of unease: metropolitan unease regarding the laggard, draggy hinterland; mofussil anxiety regarding what appears increasingly like an elite hijack of the Indian state; “Southern” suspicion regarding “Northern” domination; cow –belt restiveness about its own evident, and even intentional marginalization. However, I would argue further that the matter of “Hindi” is also the preferred route by which we may begin to address some of the causes of our present distress. Properly understood, properly deployed, Hindi can also play an invaluable part in the process of necessary social transformation; neglected, forswn, abandoned, it can be, and perhaps already is being, deployed in the service of other, ugly transformations.”

Hindi-belt has its own share of struggles which are institutionalized for major nationalist interest by the political parties and pressure groups in the country. The role of Hindi has been mobilized as a nationalist tool for vote-politics.

The effort to mention the connection between Hindi and nationalism is to draw attention towards the regressive politics being done and how Hindi journalism has been an active site of reproducing the nationalist values through institutionalized dominant social order at workplace. Banerjee (2003, p. 168) writes that “Indian nationalist vow to protect Bhartmata or mother India.” The social construction idea of honour is placed in the concept of nation as woman. Thus women symbolize national honour which is a political weapon against any act violating women’s body like rape. Here the social construction of gender and its relationship with nationalism makes women as signifier of nation.

Capturing experiences of women journalists in Hindi print media is to basically understand the ideological character and nature of Hindi print journalism. From this point of view, looking Hindi print journalism as a vehicle for language politics gives a convenience to relate situation and location of women in this structure of Hindi journalism which is regressive and conventional.
1.9 Objectives

This study aims at understanding experiences of women journalists working in Hindi print journalism and nature of journalism. This work aims to address the following objectives about women journalists in Hindi print media focusing on four cities of Madhya Pradesh:

- To document lived experiences of women journalists of Hindi print journalism in four cities Bhopal, Indore, Jabalpur and Gwalior of Madhya Pradesh.
- To understand how women negotiate existing hierarchies and power relations at the workplace and to examine gendered hierarchies in these four cities in Hindi print journalism.

1.10 Limitations of the Study

This study addresses lived experiences of women journalists working in Hindi print journalism. The uncritical under-representation of women journalists in Hindi journalism prompted this academic inquiry in four cities Bhopal, Indore, Jabalpur and Gwalior of Madhya Pradesh.

The number of women is so low that I had to include the narratives of women journalists in these four cities as it was not possible to get an adequate number in any one of these cities.

During the study I met women journalists belonging to forward castes only, thus women journalists from any other caste especially lower caste as well as Muslims could not be part of this study. This said there is also a relative absence of Muslim and lower caste women from Hindi print journalism.

Due to time and financial constraints I did not study the Journalists’ Union in any of these four cities (Bhopal, Indore, Jabalpur and Gwalior). Further, this research work does not discuss the nature of news-content on women or gender issues. My study focuses on working women journalists and their lived experiences.
Given resources do not allow a discussion of ownership patterns of media houses and their hierarchy in Hindi print journalism in Madhya Pradesh. It clearly focuses on lived experiences of women journalists.

The study restricts itself to print journalism and does not speak about women in Hindi electronic media; it purely deals with Hindi print journalism. I would like to clarify that my study did include few senior male journalists but it does not focus on them. This work is purely located from women journalists’ standpoint.

1.11 Chapter Plan for the Thesis

The first chapter aims at introducing the study dealing with contemporary questions on women in Media. Describing presence of women in journalism at the global and Indian level this chapter introduces the thesis on women journalists’ experiences in Hindi print journalism. It discusses certain theoretical frameworks which have been employed for analyzing themes in the dissertation. It also engages a range of literature discussing issues and concerns related to women in media focusing on Hindi print media.

The second chapter frames research methodology employed for data collection including researcher’s experiences during the process. It describes the inception of the research based in the researcher’s own experience as a journalist. It also attempts to locate this thesis in four cities i.e. Bhopal, Indore, Jabalpur and Gwalior of Madhya Pradesh which geographically contextualizes the research in contemporary Hindi print journalism scene.

The third chapter attempts to understand the four cities through the lens of feminist geography as it examines the experiences of women journalists. It focuses on the nature of these city spaces and women journalists’ relationships to spatial realities. This chapter discusses how women journalists associate themselves with the particular city and its spaces particularly within their professional life. It explores issues of safety and security in the cities and attempts to understand spatial-socio-cultural realities of cities from a gender perspective. Studying the lived experiences of women journalists this chapter unravels multiple intersecting gendered spatial-social realities embedded in city spaces.
The fourth chapter of the thesis explores the presence of women journalists in the Hindi print media beginning from their own experiences of choosing this profession of journalism. It attempts to understand their journey from the personal to the professional attempting to undo different preconceived notions about the profession. This chapter examines gendered discrimination in the profession of journalism. It also focuses on caste as a dominant reality of Hindi print media. This chapter also aims at understanding language hegemony between Hindi and English print media which constructs a power dichotomy placing English as elite and superior to Hindi.

The fifth chapter lays out the gendered workplace and gender stereotypes which construct women as low-paid labour. It explores the gendered conditions of work which reduces professional rights and acknowledgement of women journalists. It also focuses how women journalists are located in gendered workplace which negates their progress and under-represents their contribution in journalism. This chapter explores how media workplaces are projected as a gender-neutral space whereas in fact they are highly gendered.

The sixth chapter discusses how capitalist patriarchy disempowers women’s economic power and choices reinforcing men as an ultimate authority for social and economic resources. It also questions the male-hegemonic nature of journalism controlling women’s choices and freedom regarding clothing and appearance. It focuses on women journalists’ lived experiences accounting for a very small presence in higher positions of the profession.

The seventh chapter explores certain social perceptions which fail to distinguish women journalists’ roles as a wife, mother performing other dual-responsibilities in domestic spaces too. It focuses on the experiences of marriage, family and motherhood and asks questions about patriarchal nature of journalism. It also tries to understand that women’s growing age is negatively assessed in the field of journalism. This chapter questions the non-negotiable side of the profession which does not acknowledge women’s personal life engagements.
Chapter eight discusses experiences of sexual harassment in Hindi print media. It tries to understand the gap between legal provisions and practical implementation of the sexual harassment law at workplace. It tries to focus on different forms of sexual harassment which are uncritically normalized. It questions the sexist nature of dominant forces of Hindi journalism.