

An Analytical Study of Challenges for Women Journalists in Television Channels in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana

Bandi Sunitha¹, *Prof. V. Durga Bhavani²

¹Research Scholar, Department of Communication and Journalism, Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam, Tirupati, A.P., India.

²Department of Communication and Journalism, Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam, Tirupati, A.P., India.

***Corresponding Author:** Prof. V. Durga Bhavani

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ABSTRACT:

The role of women journalists in television media has been more prominent in recent years, mirroring broader cultural developments toward professional diversity and gender inclusiveness. Women have many opportunities to engage in news creation, presentation, and editorial decision-making through television channels, which are a potent mass communication medium. Women journalists still face a variety of institutional, professional, and sociocultural challenges that affect their work environment and career advancement, despite their increasing presence. The current study, "An Analytical Study of Opportunities and Challenges Faced by Women Journalists in Television Channels in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana," aims to investigate the opportunities and challenges that women face in the television media industry.

The study focuses on important aspects such as job prospects, career progression, skill development, working conditions, and organisational support networks. The data was analysed using statistical techniques such as correlation analysis, Chi-square testing, and descriptive statistics. The results show that women journalists have a moderate number of opportunities and challenges, with problems including work-life balance, workplace pressure, safety concerns, and irregular working hours being prevalent. While correlation analysis reveals strong positive links between job progression and elements like training, mentorship, and leadership opportunities, the Chi-square results show that these difficulties are prevalent across several designations.

KEYWORDS: Women Journalists, Television Media, Gender Equality, Workplace Challenges, Career Advancement, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana

1. INTRODUCTION

Mass media play a significant role in shaping public opinion, disseminating information, and influencing social, political, and cultural discourse in modern democratic societies (1). Among various forms of mass communication, television journalism has emerged as one of the most influential media because of its ability to combine visual presentation with immediate news reporting (2). The growth of television broadcasting in India, particularly regional language channels, has expanded the reach of news and information across diverse sections of society (3). This expansion has also created employment opportunities within the media industry, allowing more professionals, including women, to participate in journalism (4).

Historically, however, journalism was a male-dominated profession, and women faced several structural barriers that limited their participation and career advancement in media organisations (5). Although the number of women entering journalism has increased significantly over the past few decades, gender disparities still exist in terms of professional recognition, leadership opportunities, and workplace conditions (6). Understanding these dynamics is essential for evaluating the status of women journalists within contemporary media institutions.

1.1. Women Journalists in Television Channels

Women journalists refer to female media professionals who are involved in collecting, analysing, producing, and disseminating news through television broadcasting platforms (2). Their responsibilities include news reporting, anchoring, editing, research, production, and coordination within newsroom environments. In modern television journalism, women are not only visible as news presenters but also actively participate in field reporting, investigative journalism, and editorial activities (7).

The increasing presence of women in journalism reflects broader social transformations in education, employment opportunities, and gender equality (6). Women journalists contribute diverse perspectives to news coverage and help broaden the scope of public discussions on issues such as social justice, gender equality, and community development.

1.2. Women's Participation in Journalism

The participation of women in journalism has evolved considerably over the years. In earlier periods, women were often excluded from mainstream reporting roles and were mainly assigned to sections such as lifestyle, culture, or family-related news (8). Over time, however, the expansion of media industries, improved educational opportunities, and social movements advocating gender equality enabled more women to enter the journalism profession (6).

With the development of television broadcasting and the emergence of 24-hour news channels, women journalists began occupying more visible positions as news anchors, reporters, and producers (3). Despite these developments, gender inequalities continue to exist in many media organizations, particularly in leadership and decision-making roles (9).

2.4. Women in Media and Gender Equality

Media institutions play a crucial role in shaping societal attitudes and cultural values (1). The participation of women in media organizations therefore, has important implications for promoting gender equality. When women actively participate in news production and editorial decision-making, they contribute to more balanced and inclusive media representation (7).

However, research suggests that women journalists often face challenges such as limited access to leadership positions, unequal recognition, and gender-based stereotypes in newsroom environments (6). These issues are frequently explained through theoretical perspectives such as Feminist Media Theory and Glass Ceiling Theory, which highlight how institutional structures and cultural norms influence gender relations in professional settings (5). Promoting gender equality in media organizations requires supportive policies, inclusive newsroom cultures, and equal opportunities for professional advancement.

2.5. Regional Television in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana

The regional television landscape in India has experienced rapid growth over the past two decades (3). In states such as Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, the expansion of Telugu-language Television channels has transformed the media environment. These channels operate continuously, covering political developments, social issues, cultural events, and regional affairs.

The growth of regional television has created numerous employment opportunities for journalists and media professionals (4). Women journalists are increasingly visible in these Telugu television channels as anchors, reporters, producers, and editors. Despite this increased participation, questions remain regarding their professional status, working conditions, and opportunities for career advancement within television organizations (9). Examining the experiences of women journalists in this regional media context is therefore essential for understanding gender dynamics in television journalism.

2.6. Significance of Studying Women Journalists in Television

Studying the status of women journalists in television is important for several reasons. First, it helps to understand the level of gender equality within media channels and the professional opportunities available to women journalists (6). Second, it provides insights into workplace challenges such as discrimination, safety concerns, work–life balance, and job security that may influence women’s participation in journalism (9).

Third, analyzing the professional experiences of women journalists contributes to the development of more inclusive practices and policies that support gender equality in media institutions. Finally, such research contributes to the broader academic discourse on gender and media by providing empirical evidence on the experiences of women journalists in regional television channels (7).

Table 1.1 Channels Considered for Study

Channel Type	No. of Channels
General Entertainment Channels (GEC)	18
News Chnannels	10
Sports Channels	9
Devotional Channels	13
TOTAL	50

Source: <https://www.barcindia.co.in>, <https://www.trai.gov.in>

The number of television channels chosen for the current study are displayed in the table 1.1. GEC,News,sports, and devotional channels are the Four main categories . The media environment of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana was represented by a total of 50 television broadcasters.

Table1.2 State wise Total Women Journalist

State	Women Journalists
Andhra Pradesh	335
Telangana	384
TOTAL	719

Source: <https://www.ifj.org>, <https://editorsguild.in>

The estimated number of female journalists employed by Andhra Pradesh and Telangana television networks is shown in Table 1.2. It shows that there are more women journalists

in Telangana than in Andhra Pradesh. There are 719 women journalists as per the available sources.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Eddy, Ross Arguedas, Mukherjee, and Nielsen (2023) examined the representation of women in leadership positions across news organizations in twelve international media markets. The research analysed gender distribution in senior editorial roles and assessed the level of progress toward leadership equality in journalism. Eddy et al. reported that women remained underrepresented in top editorial positions despite gradual improvements in some regions. The research indicated that structural inequalities and organizational cultures continued to influence leadership opportunities for women. The results emphasized the need for institutional reforms and inclusive policies to promote balanced gender representation within global news media leadership.

Bhargav (2023) examined the working realities of stringers and freelance reporters operating in small-town India. The study focused on the marginal position of these journalists within the broader media field and highlighted the unstable nature of their employment. Bhargav observed that stringers frequently worked without formal contracts, institutional protection, or adequate remuneration. The research also indicated that newsroom hierarchies and uneven resource distribution intensified professional insecurity. The results revealed that precarious labour conditions affected journalistic autonomy, professional identity, and career sustainability, revealing structural inequalities that shaped news production in regional and small-town media environments.

Chaudhary (2021) examined the work–life balance of women journalists employed in the print media industry. The author described how professional responsibilities, irregular working hours, and newsroom pressures influenced the personal and family lives of women journalists. The author indicated that maintaining balance between occupational duties and domestic responsibilities remained a significant concern for many women in print journalism. Chaudhary also noted that organizational flexibility, supportive management practices, and professional understanding played important roles in improving work satisfaction. The discussion emphasized that balanced work environments could enhance productivity, well-being, and long-term career stability for women journalists.

Rajeesh Kumar and Vethanayagam (2025) explored freedom of expression, dissent, and unionism among journalists working in a regional language television industry in India. Rajeesh Kumar and Vethanayagam described how newsroom culture, organizational policies, and professional associations influenced journalists' ability to express opinions and participate in collective action. The authors indicated that journalists often navigated complex relationships between editorial independence and institutional authority. The discussion highlighted that professional solidarity, union activities, and ethical commitments played significant roles in safeguarding journalistic freedom. The analysis emphasized the importance of supportive institutional structures for protecting journalists' rights.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This part of the study focused on the objectives, hypotheses of the study, research design, methods of data collection and the efforts that were taken for questionnaire development for the research. The sampling design and procedures were discussed in detail, along with data collection and data analysis.

3.1. Research Gaps:

- ✓ Limited regional research exists on women journalists working in television channels in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.
- ✓ Most of the previous studies focus on print or digital media, with limited attention to television journalism.
- ✓ Insufficient studies analyze workplace challenges such as gender discrimination, safety issues, and work–life balance affecting women journalists.

3.2. Research questions:

Based on the research problem and identified gaps in the literature, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What types of professional roles and responsibilities are performed by women journalists in television media organizations?
2. What workplace challenges do women journalists face in television channels?
3. What are the supporting opportunities for career advancement of women journalists?

3.3. Need for the study:

The number of women journalists has increased due to the quick growth of television media in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, yet both opportunities and enduring challenges continue to influence their professional experiences. Women journalists continue to face challenges such as workplace inequity, limited career advancement, work-life imbalance, and safety concerns, even though the industry offers visibility, employment, and skill development. There is a knowledge vacuum on the realities of their professional life due to the absence of thorough, region-specific research on their working circumstances and career experiences. To improve the status and working conditions of women journalists in television media, it is imperative that this study critically analyses these dimensions, draws attention to current inequalities, and produces evidence-based insights that can aid in the creation of inclusive policies and practices.

3.4. Objectives of the Study

The study is guided by the following objectives:

1. To examine the difficulties and working conditions that women journalists encounter in television media channels.
2. To explore the various opportunities related to employment, career progression, and skill development among women journalists.

3.5. Hypotheses of the Study

The study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Women journalists in television channels face significant challenges related to working conditions, including work–life balance, job security, and workplace safety.

H2: There are significant Employment opportunities and skill development initiatives for the professional growth of women journalists in television media.

3.6. Research Design

- The study adopts a descriptive research design.

- Descriptive research is used to systematically describe the characteristics and experiences of women journalists in television media.

3.7. Data Collection

a) Primary Data

Primary data for the study were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to women journalists working in television channels in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The questionnaire includes questions related to opportunities and challenges of women journalists.

Questionnaire:

The purpose of the current study's questionnaire was to gather primary data from women journalists employed by Andhra Pradesh and Telangana's television channels.

The questionnaire was split into three sections based on these theoretical stances. Demographic data, including age, education, work experience, and job title, was gathered in Section A. In Section B, opportunities; in Section C, challenges; The replies in Sections B, C, were measured using a five-point Likert scale that went from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5).

Part	Variables	Number of Variables
Section – A	Demographic Variables	5
Section – B	Opportunities for women journalists	8
Section – C	Challenges for women journalists	8

b) Secondary Data

Secondary data are collected from:

- Academic journals and books on media studies
- Reports on women in journalism
- Government publications
- Previous research studies on gender and media

3.8. Sampling Procedure

- The sampling frame includes women journalists working in television channels across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.
- The study adopts convenience sampling to select respondents who are actively engaged in television journalism.

3.9. Sample size:

210 questionnaires were given to the responders by the researcher. Of these, 120 filled questionnaires were returned. 90 of the responses were defective and incomplete. The final sample size was limited to 120 respondents who were chosen for the study using the convenience sampling approach after the faulty responses were eliminated. However, the researcher used a larger sample of 120 women journalists employed by different television channels in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana

3.10. Statistical Tools:

In this research, all the questionnaire responses were coded into Microsoft Excel 2021 spreadsheet, verifying for missing data and inconsistently filled-in questionnaires. The data coded were transferred to IBM SPSS 26.0 under its relevant defined variables, while creating the data file for analysis.

The following Statistical tools are used

- Descriptive Statistics
- Chi-Square Test
- Correlation

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1. Television Channels:

Table 4.1. Sample profile of Television Channels and the respondents

S.No	Channel	AP	%	Telangana	%	Total (AP & Telangana)
1	ETV Telugu	4	8.00	5	7.14	9
2	Gemini TV	3	6.00	4	5.71	7
3	Zee Telugu	2	4.00	3	4.29	5
4	Star Maa	3	6.00	4	5.71	7
5	Star Maa Gold	2	4.00	3	4.29	5
6	Gemini Movies	3	6.00	4	5.71	7
7	ETV Plus	2	4.00	3	4.29	5
8	Zee Cinemalu	2	4.00	3	4.29	5
9	Star Maa Movies	2	4.00	3	4.29	5
10	TV9 Telugu	4	8.00	5	7.14	9
11	ABN Andhra Jyothi	3	6.00	4	5.71	7
12	NTV Telugu	3	6.00	4	5.71	7
13	Sakshi TV	2	4.00	2	2.86	4
14	Mahaa News	5	10.00	7	10.00	12
15	SVBC	5	10.00	6	8.57	11
Total		50	100%	70	100%	120

The study examined television channels across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, where 50 channels were operating in both states. Among these, 15 channels were selected based on the number of employees for detailed analysis. The selected channels covered major categories such as entertainment, news, sports, and devotional segments, ensuring adequate representation.

Table 4.2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

S.No	Demographic Characteristics	Group	Frequency	Percent
1	Age	Below 25	24	20.0
		25–35	54	45.0
		36–45	29	24.2
		Above 45	13	10.8

2	Designation	News Anchor	19	15.8
		Reporter	48	40.0
		Senior Reporter	19	15.8
		Correspondent	12	10.0
		News Producer	12	10.0
		Editor	8	6.7
	Bureau Chief	2	1.7	
3	Education	Undergraduate	37	30.8
		Postgraduate	58	48.3
		Doctorate	17	14.2
		Other	8	6.7
4	Experience	Less than 2 years	26	21.7
		2–5 years	44	36.7
		6–10 years	27	22.5
		More than 10 years	23	19.1
Grand Total			120	100%

Inference: Data was collected from the 120 Respondents from 15 Television channels based on their age, gender, Experience, nature of the job, and the status of their income. Age, Designation, Education, Years of Experience.

4.2. Reliability Test:

Dimension	No. of Variables	Cronbach's Alpha
Opportunities	8	0.989
Challenges	8	0.991
Total	16	0.990

Source: Primary data through questionnaire

Inference: The reliability analysis shows very high internal consistency among the 16 variables used in the study. Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.989 and 0.991, along with a split-half correlation of 0.948 and reliability coefficient of 0.973, indicate that the questionnaire is highly reliable and suitable for analysing women journalists' status, challenges, and opportunities.

4.3. Analysis With Descriptive Statistics

Dimension	No. of Variables	Mean Scores
Opportunities	8	3.2
Challenges	8	3.3
Total	16	3.2

Source: Primary data through questionnaire

Inference: The descriptive statistics indicate that all four study dimensions show similar mean scores ranging from 3.2 to 3.3. challenges recorded the highest mean (3.3), suggesting

slightly greater concern among respondents. Overall, the average mean score of 3.2 reflects a moderate Workplace perception regarding opportunities for career advancement, .

4.4. Chi square test- to examine the challenges and working conditions that women journalists encounter in television media channels.

Table 4.5: Chi-Square Test Results for Difficulties and Working Conditions of Women Journalists

S. No	Working Condition Variables	Pearson Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig. (p-value)	Result
1	Suitability of working hours	26.445	24	0.331	Not Significant
2	Difficulty in balancing work and family responsibilities	31.369	24	0.143	Not Significant
3	Work pressure due to tight deadlines	19.341	24	0.734	Not Significant
4	Safety concerns during night shifts	34.775	24	0.072	Not Significant
5	Organizational support during field assignments	18.145	24	0.796	Not Significant
6	Gender discrimination in workplace	19.352	24	0.733	Not Significant
7	Stress due to irregular working schedules	17.405	24	0.831	Not Significant
8	Safety while performing reporting duties	27.683	24	0.274	Not Significant
<i>Source: Primary data through questionnaire</i>					

Inference: The Chi-Square analysis indicates that there is no statistically significant relationship between the designation of women journalists and various workplace challenges, as all significance values are greater than the 0.05 level. However, the findings reveal that women journalists across different designations experience common issues such as job pressure, irregular working hours, safety concerns during reporting, and work-life balance difficulties. These results highlight the importance of strengthening organisational support, safety measures, and workplace policies to improve the overall working conditions of women journalists in television channels.

4.5. Correlation Analysis

Table 4.6: Correlation Analysis – Leadership, Equality and Career Advancement Opportunities of Women Journalists

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Equal promotion opportunities	1							
Encouragement to assume leadership roles	.823**	1						

Equal training and development opportunities	.826**	.828**	1					
Fair consideration for managerial/editorial positions	.829**	.815**	.819**	1				
Equal career advancement opportunities	.819**	.827**	.824**	.839**	1			
Mentorship from senior professionals	.838**	.821**	.836**	.824**	.821**	1		
motivated to take up decision-making roles	.831**	.834**	.829**	.822**	.836**	.827**	1	
Training for skills improvement	.825**	.832**	.838**	.821**	.829**	.833**	.835**	1
N = 120								
Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).								
Source: Primary data through questionnaire (SPSS Output)								

Inference: The Pearson correlation analysis shows strong and positive relationships among factors influencing women journalists’ career advancement, equality, and leadership opportunities in television Channels. All correlations are statistically significant at the 0.01 level, indicating meaningful associations. Variables such as equal promotion opportunities, training access, mentorship, and leadership encouragement are strongly interconnected. These findings suggest that fair organisational practices and professional support significantly influence women journalists’ career growth and access to leadership positions in television channels.

5. FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS, LIMITATIONS, SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH AND CONCLUSION

5.1. Findings

1. With mean values ranging from 3.05 to 3.33, the study found that women journalists' socio-professional status was varied moderately across television channels. These discrepancies revealed disparities in performance evaluation, compensation, recognition, and decision-making involvement. The hypothesis's acceptance varied to the differences in their professional standing.

This result was in line with previous research that emphasised gender-based disparities in TV channels, where women frequently received less recognition and less possibilities for advancement.

2. According to the Chi-square test results ($\chi^2 = 19.341$ to 34.775 ; p -values = 0.072 to $0.831 > 0.05$) and descriptive statistics (mean range: 3.14 – 3.52), women journalists experienced moderate levels of work pressure, safety concerns, and work–life imbalance. Even though statistical significance was not always demonstrated, these results were consistent with earlier studies that documented the existence of workplace stress and safety concerns in journalism, particularly for women.

3. With values ranging from $r = 0.819$ to 0.839 ($p < 0.01$), the correlation study demonstrated a substantial positive association between professional advancement,

equality, and leadership possibilities. This demonstrated that professional advancement was strongly impacted by training, mentorship, and access to leadership positions. This result provided significant support for previous research that highlighted the value of equal opportunities and organisational support structures in advancing women's careers in the media industries.

5.2. Suggestions of the Study

1. Television Channels should promote gender-sensitive workplace cultures through awareness programs and training to reduce gender bias and stereotypes.
2. Establish clear grievance redressal mechanisms to address harassment, discrimination, and workplace conflicts effectively.
3. Provide professional training in digital journalism, investigative reporting, and emerging media technologies to enhance women journalists' skills.
4. Introduce mentoring and networking programmes to support career guidance and professional development.

5.3. CONCLUSION

The study examined the workplace challenges and career advancement opportunities of women journalists in television media organisations of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The findings reveal that women actively participate in reporting, anchoring, and production roles but remain underrepresented in leadership and decision-making positions. Women journalists face challenges such as irregular working hours, work pressure, safety concerns, and difficulties in maintaining work–life balance. The results also show that organisational policies, workplace culture, and gender bias significantly influence their professional growth and job satisfaction. Strengthening gender-inclusive policies, mentorship opportunities, and supportive workplace practices is essential to promote equal opportunities and improve the professional development of women journalists in television Channels.

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