

PERCEPTIONS OF BROADCAST JOURNALISTS ON JOB RELATED ASPECTS

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Abstract

Keywords:

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Advancement in technology, increased competition and decreasing salary had changed the working environment of journalists. A survey has been conducted with an objective to explore the present conditions of broadcast journalists in Indian state. A structured questionnaire was designed to collect information on perceptions, attitudes of broadcast journalists covering 10 items. A total of 202 journalists formed the sample of the study. This study found that about fifty percent of broadcast journalists want to leave the profession before superannuation due to low salary, irregular working hours. A quarter of them had not received an appointment letter from the organization at the time of appointment and were not receiving salary regularly and a significant of them were somewhat happy. They were concerned with job security, low pay, low autonomy and were under pressure to meet the expectations of the employers. Most of the respondents felt that job security followed by criticism from authority department superiors, low wage level and leadership style were the major factors responsible for inducing stress among them.

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1. Introduction

After globalisation, media industry got enormous boost and unlinking & down liking facility provided from Indian soil. As per the Minister of Information and broadcast(MIB), there are 385 News Channels in India. The number of TV households in India reported to be 181 million in 2016 with a penetration of 63% (FICCI 2017) with a viewership of 8-10% .Regional news channels constitute lion share in among the news channels [17].

At the same time number of media houses have been arbitrarily closing down editions or tightening journalist and non-journalist staff while also going against the Majithia Wage Board recommendations, but there was little coverage in the media about it .The Working Journalists Act of 1955 laid down service conditions for journalists. The act followed the recommendations of the Press Council of India covering a minimum notice period, gratuity, provident fund, settlement of industrial disputes, leave with pay, hours of work and minimum wages. In cases of retrenchment, under the act, the minimum period of notice is six months in the case of an editor and three months in the case of any other working journalist—not four days, or even two months [35]. But by 1993, a media contract system was introduced [8], which reduces journalists' bargaining power. Interestingly, wage boards do not apply to the electronic media [1].

According to data compiled by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), out of 1305 journalists worldwide, 47 journalists have been killed in India since 1992 [9].

The news channels in Hyderabad city, Telanangana state were controlled by four categories of people. One, business houses with political affiliations invest in the media to influence over the economy and politics (ETV, NTV, TV5, news, Studio N, ABN, Maha News and CVR News). Second, politicians or their family members started media houses in their individual capacity, which facilitates them to make a move to their political affiliation based on their own economic and political affiliations (Sakshi, T News and V6). Third, individuals who invest in the media to provide a platform for public debates (TV9 and HMTV). Fourth, political parties directly run TV channels to share their official party line with public (10TV and 99TV). The Telugu electronic media is dominated by the Kamma and the Reddy Caste people. The Caste networks are an important factor in AP and Telangana politics [37]. The prevalence of four categories of people

in the Telugu electronic Media, the Journalist succumbs to pressures of politics, business and ideology. Journalists were not given a free hand in broadcasting news, some time caste plays major role in allotment of particular beats/desk to the journalists.

2. Review of Literature

Many Indian studies such as Manjunath (2007), Press Institute of India (2005), Murthy & Anitha (2010), Devender (2014), Akhileshwari (2014), Manjula (2015), and Tomar (2011, 2017) were focused on the working status of women journalists in India. Working conditions of women in English language press were found to be better than vernacular press. Most of the women journalists were given soft beats and working for a low salary on contract base. A sociological study on journalists revealed that most of the journalists satisfied with their present job. The median salary was Rs. 7500 in the year 2015 and 60 percent of journalists reported that they would continue in journalism. About 20 percent of journalist felt that job insecurity and 60 percent justified using of microphone and camera for professional purpose, while disposing their duties (Sathi Reddy, 2005). The socio economic conditions of Kannada print journalists (Chintamani, 2013) were found to be deteriorating over the period. The salary of Jaipur print media journalists was comparatively low as per global standards and they were the sole earning members of the their family. Nearly fifty percent of journalist's owned two bedroom house (Neeraj, 2013). The variables such as pay, promotion, work relationships with supervisors and coworkers, communication within organizations, use of skills and abilities, operational conditions, supervision, communication, promotion, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, logistic service were considered as job satisfaction measuring variables (Offli et al. 2014; Bezabh, 2015). Although many studies on working conditions and its predictors have been undertaken in various countries, (Keel, 2008; Farias et al, 2009; Lah and Suzana, 2009; Sanders and Hanna, 2010; McMane, 2008; Raeymaeckers, 2008; Hao and George, 2009; Weischenberg, 2005; Agnieszka, 2009; Pasti, 2008; Brownlee and Beam, 2007; Mellado, 2009; Arroyave and Barrios, 2008; Kioko, 2016; Yariv et al. 2008; Reinardy, 2012; Bauer et al. 2012; Kirat, 2012; Nawawy, 2012; and Iqbal and Ullah, 2013) such research is seldom done in India, particularly on TV journalists. The Global Journalists in the 21st Century (Weaver & Willnat, 2012) carried no data from any States of India.

3. Research Methodology

In this study, a total of 470 respondents belonging to 16 news channels of Hyderabad city, Telangana State of India were explained the aim and objectives of the study and requested to participate in the study. A total of 202 subjects (43%) responded and formed the sample of the study. A structured self administered questionnaire was designed to collect information from the respondents of the study. A self administered questionnaires were handed over to the respondents and were requested to fill the questionnaire when they are at their leisure time and return to the researcher. The questionnaire contained 10 items covering perceptions attitude of broadcast journalist towards existing conditions. A non-probability survey method was employed in recruiting the respondents of the study from 16 TV news channels mostly located in Jubilee hills and Banjara hills of Hyderabad city, Telangana state, India. Telangana state is the 29th state of India. Telugu is a Dravidian language spoken in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Telugu ranks fourth among the languages with the highest number of speakers in India and constitute 6.93 percent of the 2011 census.

Table 01: Details on the monthly income of respondents

Income (Rs.)	n=202	Percent
Below 10000	8	4.0
10001-20000	57	28.21
20001-30000	89	44.05
30001-40000	26	12.87
40001-50000	16	7.92
> 50001-55000	6	2.97

Table 02: Details of salary payment status

Salary payment	(n=202)	Percent
Regular Salary on time	127	62.8
Irregular Salary	75	37.1

Table 03: Details of issuance of appointment letter at the time of joining organizations (n=202)

Details	n=202 (%)
Appointment letter receivers	163(80.69)
Non receivers	39(19.30)

Table 04:Details of house ownership status of respondents

Ownership	(n=202)	Percent
House ownership	46	22.8
No house ownership	156	77.2

Table 05: Opinion of the respondents on the professional happiness as a journalist

Details	(n=202)	Percent
Very happy	99	49.0
Somewhat happy	65	32.2
Somewhat unhappy	17	8.4
Very unhappy	3	1.5
No opinion	18	8.9

Table 06: Opinion of respondents on leaving journalism before superannuation

Response	n=202	Percent
Leave profession	93	46.0
Stay in the profession	51	25.2
No Opinion	58	28.7

Table 07: Opinion of respondents on the reasons for leaving journalism profession

Reasons	(n=202)	Percent
Too much pressure	11	5.4
Lack of autonomy	8	4.0
Boring and monotonous work	12	5.9
Irregular working hours	23	11.4
Low salary	86	42.6
Lack of promotion chances	19	9.4
Lack of learning opportunities	2	1.0
Disagree with editorial policy	1	.5
Political interference	12	5.9
No prospect for press freedom	21	10.4
None of these reasons	7	3.5

Table 08: Opinion of the respondents on their satisfaction levels on job aspects (n=202)

Details	Not satisfied at all	Somewhat satisfied	Quite satisfied	Extremely Satisfied
Pay	34 (16.8%)	131 (64.9%)	29 (14.4%)	8 (4%)
Fringe benefits	50 (24.8%)	118 (58.4%)	19 (9.4%)	15 (7.4%)
Editorial policies	20(9.9%)	121 (59.9%)	38 (18.8%)	23 (11.4%)
Job security	44 (21.8%)	99 (49%)	42 (20.8%)	17 (8.4%)
Training	35 (17.3%)	113 (55.9%)	33 (16.3%)	21 (10.4%)
Job autonomy	20 (9.9%)	108 (53.5%)	49 (24.3%)	25 (12.4%)
Advancement	47 (23.3%)	91 (45%)	50 (24.8%)	14 (6.9%)
Help people	23(11.4%)	92 (45.5%)	55 (27.2%)	32 (15.8%)
Influence public affairs	24 (11.9%)	98(48.5%)	57(28.2%)	23 (11.4%)

Table 09. Perceptions of respondents on severity of workplace problems (n=202)

Variable	Very big (%)	Rather big (%)	Difficult to say (%)	Rather small (%)	Very small (%)
Competition between workers	41(20.3)	30 (14.9)	31(15.3)	66(32.7%)	34(16.8)
Lack of Confidence in each other	29 (14.4%)	43(21.3%)	37(18.3%)	73(36.1%)	20(9.9%)
Chance to influence one's own working hours	26(12.9%)	28(13.9%)	44(21.8%)	83(41.1%)	21(10.4%)
Chance to influence work content	17(8.4%)	43(21.3%)	32(15.8%)	86(42.6%)	24(11.9%)
Chance to influence working conditions	18(8.9%)	25(12.4%)	43(21.3%)	100(49.5%)	16(7.9%)
Too hierarchic job structure	21(10.4%)	34(16.8%)	47(23.3%)	78(38.6%)	22(10.9%)
Journalist's inequality	36(17.8%)	32(15.8%)	46(22.8%)	61(30.2%)	27(13.4%)
Authoritarian Management style	38(18.8%)	21(10.4%)	57(28.2%)	61(30.2%)	25(13.4%)
Bad organization of work	19(9.4%)	13(6.4%)	47(23.3%)	63(31.2%)	60(29.7%)
Haste and greater time pressures	32(15.8%)	36(17.8%)	36(17.8%)	71(35.1%)	27(13.4%)
Salary does not correspond with demand	73(36.1%)	46(22.8%)	29(14.4%)	26(12.9%)	28(13.9%)

Table 10: Stress causing factors among respondents

Factors	(n=202)	Percent
Criticism from authority department	31	15.3
Labour wage level	24	11.9
Development of media	10	5.0
Working load assessment	15	7.4
Business state of media	12	5.9
Stress from marketing department	1	.5
Job security	50	24.8
Attributes of the media	10	5.0
Leadership style	22	10.9
An internal competition	1	.5
Sense of belonging	11	5.4
Professional development	11	5.4
Individual ability	4	2.0

4.Data analysis and interpretation

Analysis of monthly income of respondents showed that the majority of them had a monthly income Rs.20001-30000 and this observation is in agreement with the study on journalists from Jaipur (Neeraj 2013). Only 4 % of respondents had a monthly income of rupees less than 10000 (Table 01). This suggests that those involved in TV journalism were living descent if not luxurious life. A significant percent (37.1%) of respondents reported that they were not getting their salary on time (Table 02). Around Nineteen percent of respondents revealed that they had not received the appointment letter at the time of joining respective organization (Table 03). This may because management will not face any legal problems when employee terminated from his service without any notice. The majority of the respondents of the present study reported living in the rented than own houses. This may be due to the lack of resources to own the houses or not interested to own houses in the place of working or may have owned houses in

their native places (Table 04). Nearly fifty percent of the respondents reported that they were very happy, whereas 32 percent of the respondents were somewhat happy with their profession and only 1.5 % reported very unhappy (Table 05). More or less 50% of respondents reported that they leave

their profession before superannuation while one by fourth of them opted to stay in the profession and 28% reserved their opinion (Table 06). The major reasons expressed by the respondents for leaving the Journalism profession were low salary (42.6%), irregular working hours (11.4%), no prospects or press freedom (10.4%), boring and monotonous work and political interference (5.9%) (Table 07). Most of the TV Journalists had reported that they were somewhat satisfied with job related aspects such as pay, fringe benefits, editorial policies, job security, training, job autonomy, advancement, help people and influence public affairs. Only small percent of TV Journalists were found to be extremely satisfied with the afore mentioned job aspects (Table 08). In an earlier study also it was observed that journalists were satisfied with the job aspects such as job stability (83.8%), use of talents and creativity (75.1%), the extent of freedom (76.2%), peer relationships (80%), and relationships with sources (63.1%) (Kirat, 2000). The high satisfaction viewpoint was shared by the Journalists with higher designation and better salaries. It was observed that though the Flemish Journalists were most dissatisfied with their promotion prospects, workload, and income, but their overall, job satisfaction were relatively high (Karin Raeymaeckers et al. 2008). A Danish study demonstrates that the fissure between ideals and practice in journalism had a pessimistic impact on job satisfaction as the constraints prevent the enactment of ideals and create frustration (Pihl-Thingvad 2010). This could prove vital impasse for the perceived working conditions in the media industry and may lower the attractiveness of the profession to a potential newcomer (Skovsgaard, et al 2009). Most of the French Journalists believed that profession itself was declining, but they were expected to remain in journalism (McMane 2008). In another study on German journalists revealed that only about half of them were satisfied with the time available for investigation (48%), income (54%), job security (50%), and daily workload (48%) (Siegfried et al. 2005). The highest satisfaction levels were found among Polish journalists working for online media (46.6% “very satisfied”) followed by radio stations (27.1%), and monthly magazines (24.8%). The lowest levels of job satisfaction were found among respondents (5% very satisfied”) with the lowest level of

autonomy in the selection of news items (Stepinska, et al. 2009). Most Russian journalists were fairly satisfied with most aspects of their jobs (autonomy, ability to help other people and income). Younger journalists were found to be more fervent about prospects and satisfied with the profession's political independence (Svetlana Pasti, et al 2008).

A Study on Slovenian journalists revealed that four out of five journalists were either satisfied or very satisfied with their job. Further, they informed that job autonomy and the opportunity to help people be major reasons for opting this profession (Peter Lah and Suzana 2009). Two-thirds of the Swiss journalists found that the workload, the time available to do research, and the job security satisfying aspects of the job (Heinz Bonfadelli, et al 2008).

These observations demonstrate that the major concern of the most broadcast journalists was on low pay, limited job security, and frequent encounters with pressures, threats, and harassment. Nevertheless, Israeli journalists reported high levels of job satisfaction in absolute terms and in comparison with other countries. The explanation for this discrepancy might be rooted in the fact that people do not choose to become journalists on the assumption that they will get rich. Journalists who were more satisfied with their work tended to feel more autonomous and enjoy trust with the audience. These were probably additional reasons for the high levels of satisfaction (Tsfati and Meyers 2008). Weaver and Willnat (2012) compared conditions of the journalists of different countries and reported the predictors of job satisfactions in various countries. In Chile: pay and the chance to use their abilities and knowledge; Japan: evaluations of the practices of news organizations and their relationships with the government; Korea: job autonomy (almost none claimed to have a great deal) and service to the society; Malaysia: job benefits, job security, and pay. Singapore: journalists ratings of their organizations and ability to cover a subject of interest; Slovenia: the chance to help people and autonomy on the job; Taiwan: pay and journalists rating on their organization; United Arab Emirates: job security and the chance to develop a specialty and in Brazil it was observed that low pay and lack of recognition were the predictors of job dissatisfaction. Among Finland, Korea, Poland, and Russia, countries, the perceived freedom on the job ranked as the most important predictor of job satisfaction. Job satisfaction of journalists in many countries is linked to pay and job security as well as perceived autonomy. Intention to stay in journalism seems more dependent on the attractiveness of alternative jobs. The Characteristics of the job such as pay, promotion, supervision, working

conditions and relationships with co-workers have been shown to be components of job satisfaction(Scott Macdonald, Peter MacIntyre (1997), As per Weaver and Wilhoit (2012) studies, the most important indicator of job satisfaction was salary. Those who have higher salaries or higher levels of education were more likely to express greater job satisfaction (Lo, 2004).

The higher proportion of respondents observed that workplace problems such as competition between workers, lack of confidence in each other, chance of influence one's own working hours/work content/working conditions, hierarchy, inequality, authoritarian management style, bad organization of work, and haste and greater time pressures are too small to ponder with, while not getting expected salary is considered as a very big concern by them (Table 9). Most of the journalist felt that job security (24.8%), and followed by criticism from authority department (15.3%) (Superiors), low wage level (11.9%) & leadership style (10.9%) were found to be major factors responsible for causing stress among respondents in the present study (Table 10). Hong Kong journalists considered criticism from authority department was a significantly more stressful factor, whereas Journalists at news Web sites and TV stations considered labour wage level more stressful than those working at radio stations. The Newspaper journalists considered -business state of media significantly more stressful (Zhang and Su, 2010). For Korean journalists, long working hours were the most stressful factor (Young Jun Son et al 2009). The German journalists reported that effort to produce more coverage for more media give more stress (Siegfried et al. 2005).

4. Conclusion

Most of the Broadcast journalists living in rented house with salary range from Rs.2000-30000. A quarter of the journalists were not received appointment letters and not getting regular salary, in spite of on permanent employment. More or less fifty percent of respondents reported that they leave their profession before superannuation while one by fourth of them opted to stay in the profession and cited low salary was the reason to leave profession were low salary. Most of the respondents have reported that they were somewhat satisfied with job related aspects such as pay, fringe benefits, editorial policies, job security, training, job autonomy, advancement, help people and the ability to influence public affairs. Most of the respondents felt that job security

followed by criticism from authority department superiors, low wage level and leadership style were the major factors responsible for inducing stress among them.

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