



# **Empowering Women for Change**

## **Resources Pack for Women in the Media**

**Package of information and materials  
arising from the IFJ-FES Regional Gender  
Equity Workshop held in Kuala Lumpur,  
Malaysia, 6-7 July 2002**

# **Empowering Women for Change**

## **Resources Pack for Women in the Media**

**Package of information and materials arising from the IFJ-FES  
Regional Gender Equity Workshop held in Kuala Lumpur,  
Malaysia, 6-7 July 2002**

<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>page</b>
Introduction	3
How to use this Resources Pack	4
Equal opportunity	5
Language of women in unions	8
Maternity leave, part-time work, flexible working hours, child care	9
Sexual harassment	16
Special services for women	17
Women on union governing bodies	23
Women's committees, gender councils, equity councils	26
Appendix 1: List of participants	28
Appendix 2: Strategy/Action Plan	29
Appendix 3: IFJ Plan of Action on women	32
Appendix 4: Workshop papers	35

# **Empowering Women for Change**

## **Resources Pack for Women in the Media**

**Package of information and materials arising from the IFJ-FES  
Regional Gender Equity Workshop held in Kuala Lumpur,  
Malaysia, 6-7 July 2002**

### **INTRODUCTION**

As part of the Empowering Women for Change program, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) has developed this resource pack to assist women in achieving gender positive results in both their unions and the workplace.

The contents of the pack include examples of action on the following topics:

- Equal opportunity
- Language of women in unions
- Maternity leave, part-time work, flexible working hours, child care
- Sexual harassment
- Special services for women
- Women's committees, gender councils, equity councils
- Women on union governing bodies

The pack is the result of an IFJ-FES Regional Gender Equity Workshop held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 6-7 July 2002.

Journalists unions from across Asia were invited to send participants to attend the workshop. In total, there were 28 participants from journalists' organisations from 15 countries. The participants' list is attached as Appendix 1.

The participants developed a Strategy/Action Plan on key issues facing women in the media in Asia. Seven key areas were identified, with strategies identified for dealing with each issue. The Strategy/Action Plan is attached as Appendix 2.

The IFJ's Plan Of Action for women in journalism is included as Appendix 3.

Workshop papers are attached as Appendix 4.

## **HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCES PACK**

This pack is designed to be used as a resource for women working in the media and women in journalists' organisations. It contains best practice examples of actions and strategies that promote women's interests: both in the media and in their journalists organisations.

To use the pack, simply find the topic that interests you and turn to that section. There you will find descriptions of what other women have done to deal with the issue: for example, it contains sample clauses from collective agreements, clauses from union constitutions, and descriptions of gender positive actions.

The pack will also be available on the web at the IFJ's Asia-Pacific site ([www.ifj-asia.org](http://www.ifj-asia.org)) and can be added to and commented on at that site. As such, the pack is designed to evolve and be added to over time. Journalists and their unions will be encouraged to add to the resources available online.

Following are the different sections containing these resources. At the end of this pack, papers from the Regional Gender Equity Workshop are attached.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

### **IFJ**

The IFJ adopted the following policy on Equal Opportunity in 1993:

#### **A Union Policy on Equal Opportunities**

1) National journalists' unions must include a clause in their constitutions to set up a women's committee to promote equal opportunities for women journalists. The women's committee must be guaranteed a seat on the union's governing body;

2) The union must adopt a policy on equal opportunities to include:

- principles of equal opportunities as outlined in the Recommendation to Convention 111 of the International Labour Organisation (ILO):
  - access to vocational guidance and placement services;
  - access to training and employment of their own choice on the basis of individual suitability for such training or employment;
  - advancement in accordance with individual character, experience, ability and diligence;
  - security of tenure of employment;
  - remuneration for work of equal value;
  - conditions of work, including hours of work, rest periods, annual holidays with pay, occupational safety and occupational health measures, as well as social security measures and welfare facilities and benefits provided in connection with employment;
- removal of promotion barriers and job segregation;
- a campaign for fully paid parental leave of at least three months;
- a campaign for the option to take up to one year unpaid parental leave with guaranteed employment of equal status on return;
- equal access to company accommodation, medical aid, insurance and pension rights and other benefits;
- flexible arrangements for parents as regarding working schedules and rest periods;
- training in equal opportunities awareness for men and women;

3) The union must as part of its regular programme of activity:

- monitor the status of women in the union;
- provide information and services directed at female members;
- press governments to implement ILO conventions and recommendations on equal opportunities in national policy and legislation;
- include issues of equal opportunities in collective bargaining demands;

4) In developing its policy programme the Union should seek to cooperate with organisations advocating equal opportunities for the promotion of status of women journalists.

*Adopted at the IFJ Women in View Conference in Harare, 1993*

## **Australia**

The Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance (Australia) has negotiated with one of its major employers several interesting Equal Opportunity clauses. The first is:

### **23 Management Training on Equal Opportunity**

The Company will incorporate training on equal opportunity principles into management development programs to be introduced within six (6) months of the agreement being certified.

Secondly, the Alliance has required that all positions be advertised internally, which has the effect of eliminating the first hurdle for women gaining seniority in journalism: knowledge that a position is vacant. The clause is reproduced below:

### **26 Internal advertising of positions**

- 26.1 All permanent vacancies will be advertised internally except in exceptional circumstances or when they are commercially sensitive.
- 26.2 This will include advertising such vacancies as news desk, section heads, rounds people and foreign postings.

**Malaysia**

The Malaysian journalists' union incorporated a clause into its collective agreements which provides for equal opportunity:

**COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT 1999-2002  
NATIONAL UNION OF JOURNALISTS MALAYSIA - UTUSAN  
MELAYU**

**(Translation from Bahasa Malaysia)**

**Clause 33 GENDER EQUALITY**

Female Workers shall be given equal rights as the male workers.

## **LANGUAGE OF WOMEN IN UNIONS**

### **Germany**

The German journalists' union has two parts to its name: Deutscher Journalisten-Verband ('German Journalists' Federation') and Gewerkschaft der Journalistinnen und Journalisten ('Trade Union of Journalists'). The second part of the name contains both the female and male forms of the word journalist ('journalistinnen' is the female form and 'journalisten' is the male form).

Prior to 1998, the union used to be called: Deutscher Journalisten-Verband Gewerkschaft der Journalisten, which only used the male form of the word journalist. Prior to 1998, women activists in the union campaigned for many years to have the female form of the word journalist included in the name, arguing that women journalists felt alienated by the reference to the male journalists with no reference to female journalists.

In 1998, the women activists were successful in having the female form of the word journalist formally included in their union's name. They report that while this is only a small change, it has some impact on the attitudes of the male dominated union leadership.

All brochures, programs and other papers of the DJV have been reprinted over the last years, so that they are provided with both the female and male form.

### **Hong Kong**

The Hong Kong Journalists Association (HKJA) has had seven journalists who have chaired the organisation in the last 15 years. Of these seven, four have been women. Accordingly, the chair of the organisation is now formally called "Chairperson" not "Chairman".

## MATERNITY LEAVE, PART-TIME WORK, FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS

### Japan

The Japan Federation of Newspaper Workers' Unions (JFNWU) is the federation of 86 company unions, with approximately 3,000 members. Companies have to carry out one at least among the following five items for laborers with a less than 1-year-old child who do not use maternity leave by law.

- (A) Short-time service system.
- (B) Flex-time system.
- (C) To be advanced or postponed of the opening hour or closing time.
- (D) An agreement which doesn't made her (or him) work overtime.
- (E) Installation management of a child care institution etc.

Many female laborers use maternity leave. A male hardly uses. However, the number men who uses it has also increased gradually.

### Australia

The Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance (Australia) has negotiated with one of its major employers a unique employment model. Known as the "50/52 Employment Model", it allows for anyone to have their annual wage reduced by the equivalent of two weeks pay, so that they may take two extra weeks leave. The clause is reproduced below:

#### 24 50/52 Employment model

24.1 This trial employment model provides employees with the opportunity of applying for up to two (2) weeks' unpaid leave per year for no longer than the duration of the trial.

This unpaid leave, once approved, is taken in conjunction with an employee's entitlement to annual leave of six (6) weeks and three (3) days. The employee receives a revised weekly rate over 52 weeks adjusted for the period of unpaid leave.

24.2 The capacity of the Company to offer this form of employment arrangement in a sustainable manner is unknown. The Company is to trial this employment model at *The Age* for a period of two (2) years from the date of certification of this Agreement.

24.3 The 50/52 trial is subject to the following conditions:

- (a) No more than three (3) employees are to participate at any one time.
- (b) Employees will apply to the Editor who may approve an employee's application to participate in the trial.
- (c) Applications will be assessed against the needs of the round or section.
- (d) Participation will be for an agreed period of time. The start and finish dates are to be confirmed in writing.
- (e) A mid-term review by *The Age* editorial management and House Committee members.
- (f) Employees taking their Annual Leave entitlement of six (6) weeks and three (3) days in each year of the trial.

The parties will hold further discussions at the end of the trial.

The standard Australian journalists' parental leave clause is reproduced below.

## **22. PARENTAL LEAVE**

Subject to the terms of this clause members are entitled to maternity, paternity and adoption leave and to work part-time in connection with the birth or adoption of a child.

The provisions of this clause apply to full-time and regular part-time members but do not apply to casuals.

### **22.1 Definitions**

**22.1.1** For the purpose of this clause **child** means a child of the member under the age of one year except for adoption of a child where '*child*' means a person under the age of five years who is placed with the member for the purposes of adoption, other than a child or step-child of the member or of the spouse of the member or a child who has previously lived continuously with the member for a period of six months or more.

**22.1.2** Subject to **clause 22.1.3**, in this clause **spouse** includes a de facto or former spouse.

**22.1.3** In relation to **clause 22.5**, **spouse** includes a de facto spouse but does not include a former spouse.

### **22.2 Basic entitlement**

**22.2.1** Subject to **subclause 22.2.3**, after twelve months continuous service, parents are entitled to a combined total of 52 weeks unpaid parental leave on a shared basis in relation to the birth or adoption of their child. For females, maternity leave may be taken and for males, paternity leave may be taken. Adoption leave may be taken in the case of adoption.

**22.2.2** Subject to **subclause 22.3.7**, parental leave is to be available to only one parent at a time, in a single unbroken period, except that both parents may simultaneously take:

**22.2.2(a)** for maternity and paternity leave, an unbroken period of up to one week at the time of the birth of the child;

**22.2.2(b)** for adoption leave, an unbroken period of up to three weeks at the time of placement of the child.

**22.2.3** Where a female member is entitled to, and takes up to 6 weeks paid maternity leave in accordance with **subclause 22.3.1**, the total period of parental leave to which parents are entitled will be 52 weeks plus the amount of paid maternity leave ie. up to 58 weeks.

### **22.3 Maternity leave**

**22.3.1** All classified female members whose length of continuous employment with the employer is three years or more shall be entitled to six weeks' maternity leave, including the period of confinement on full pay in accordance with this subclause to be taken from a date mutually agreed on by the female member and the employer provided that the member must give an undertaking in writing to

the employer that she will return to work for the employer at the end of the period of maternity leave for a period of not less than twelve months employment.

- 22.3.2** A member must provide notice to the employer in advance of the expected date of commencement of parental leave. The notice requirements are:
- 22.3.2(a)** of the expected date of confinement (included in a certificate from a registered medical practitioner stating that the member is pregnant) - at least 10 weeks; and
  - 22.3.2(b)** of the date on which the member proposes to commence maternity leave and the period of leave to be taken - at least 4 weeks.
- 22.3.3** When the member gives notice under **subclause 22.3.2(a)** the member must also provide a statutory declaration stating particulars of any period of paternity leave sought or taken by her spouse and that for the period of maternity leave she will not engage in any conduct inconsistent with her contract of employment.
- 22.3.4** A member will not be in breach of this clause if failure to give the stipulated notice is occasioned by confinement occurring earlier than the presumed date.
- 22.3.5** Subject to **clause 22.3.2** and unless agreed otherwise between the employer and member, a member may commence parental leave at any time within six weeks immediately prior to the expected date of the birth.
- 22.3.6** Where a member continues to work within the six week period immediately prior to the expected date of birth, or where the member elects to return to work within six weeks after the birth of the child, an employer may require the member to provide a medical certificate stating that she is fit to work on her normal duties.
- 22.3.7** **Special maternity leave**
- 22.3.7(a)** Where the pregnancy of a member not then on maternity leave terminates after 28 weeks other than by the birth of a living child, then the member may take unpaid special maternity leave of such periods as a registered medical practitioner certifies as necessary.
  - 22.3.7(b)** Where a member is suffering from an illness not related to the direct consequences of the confinement, the member may take any paid sick leave to which she is entitled in lieu of, or in addition to, special maternity leave.
  - 22.3.7(c)** Where a member not then on maternity leave suffers an illness related to her pregnancy, she may take any paid sick leave to which she is then entitled and such further unpaid special maternity leave as a registered medical practitioner certifies as necessary before her return to work. The aggregate of paid sick leave, special maternity leave and parental leave, including parental leave taken by a spouse, may not exceed 52 weeks.
- 22.3.8** Where leave is granted under **clause 22.3.5** or **clause 22.3.7(a)** or **clause 22.3.7(c)**, during the period of leave a member may return to work at any time, as agreed between the employer and the member provided that time does not exceed four weeks from the recommencement date notified by the member to the employer.

## **22.4 Paternity leave**

**22.4.1** A member will provide to the employer at least ten weeks prior to each proposed period of paternity leave, with:

**22.4.1(a)** a certificate from a registered medical practitioner which names his spouse, states that she is pregnant and the expected date of confinement, or states the date on which the birth took place; and

**22.4.1(b)** written notification of the dates on which he proposes to start and finish the period of paternity leave; and

**22.4.1(c)** a statutory declaration stating:

**22.4.1(c)(i)** he will take that period of paternity leave to become the primary care-giver of a child;

**22.4.1(c)(ii)** particulars of any period of maternity leave sought or taken by his spouse; and

**22.4.1(c)(iii)** that for the period of paternity leave he will not engage in any conduct inconsistent with his contract of employment.

**22.4.2** A member will not be in breach of **clause 22.4.1** if the failure to give the required period of notice is because of the birth occurring earlier than expected, the death of the mother of the child, or other compelling circumstances.

## **22.5 Adoption leave**

**22.5.1** The member will notify the employer at least ten weeks in advance of the date of commencement of adoption leave and the period of leave to be taken. A member may commence adoption leave prior to providing such notice, where through circumstances beyond the control of the member, the adoption of a child takes place earlier.

**22.5.2** Before commencing adoption leave, a member will provide the employer with a statutory declaration stating:

**22.5.2(a)** the member is seeking adoption leave to become the primary care-giver of the child;

**22.5.2(b)** particulars of any period of adoption leave sought or taken by the member's spouse; and

**22.5.2(c)** that for the period of adoption leave the member will not engage in any conduct inconsistent with their contract of employment.

**22.5.3** An employer may require a member to provide confirmation from the appropriate government authority of the placement.

**22.5.4** Where the placement of child for adoption with a member does not proceed or continue, the member will notify the employer immediately and the employer will nominate a time not exceeding four weeks from receipt of notification for the member's return to work.

**22.5.5** A member will not be in breach of this clause as a consequence of failure to give the stipulated periods of notice if such failure results from a requirement of an adoption agency to accept earlier or later placement of a child, the death of a spouse, or other compelling circumstances.

**22.5.6** A member seeking to adopt a child is entitled to take unpaid leave for the purpose of attending any compulsory interviews or examinations as are necessary as part of the adoption procedure. The member and the employer should agree on the length of the unpaid leave. Where agreement cannot be reached, the member is entitled to take up to two days unpaid leave. Where paid leave is available to the member, the employer may require the member to take such leave instead.

## **22.6 Variation of period of parental leave**

Unless agreed otherwise between the employer and member, a member may apply to their employer to change the period of parental leave on one occasion. Any such change to be notified at least four weeks prior to the commencement of the changed arrangements.

## **22.7 Parental leave and other entitlements**

A member may in lieu of or in conjunction with parental leave, access any annual leave or long service leave entitlements which the member has accrued subject to the total amount of leave not exceeding 52 weeks.

## **22.8 Transfer to a safe job**

**22.8.1** Where a member is pregnant and, in the opinion of a registered medical practitioner, illness or risks arising out of the pregnancy or hazards connected with the work assigned to the member make it inadvisable for the member to continue at her present work, the member will, if the employer deems it practicable, be transferred to a safe job at the rate and on the conditions attaching to that job until the commencement of maternity leave.

**22.8.2** If the transfer to a safe job is not practicable, the member may elect, or the employer may require the member, to commence parental leave for such period as is certified necessary by a registered medical practitioner.

## **22.9 Returning to work after a period of parental leave**

**22.9.1** A member will notify of their intention to return to work after a period of parental leave at least four weeks prior to the expiration of the leave.

**22.9.2** A member will be entitled to the position which they held immediately before proceeding on parental leave. In the case of a member transferred to a safe job pursuant to **clause 22.8**, the member will be entitled to return to the position they held immediately before such transfer.

**22.9.3** Where such position no longer exists but there are other positions available which the member is qualified for and is capable of performing, the member will be entitled to a position as nearly comparable in status and pay to that of their former position.

## **22.10 Replacement members**

- 22.10.1** A replacement member is a member specifically engaged or temporarily promoted or transferred, as a result of a member proceeding on parental leave.
- 22.10.2** Before the employer engages a replacement member the employer must inform that person of the temporary nature of the employment and of the rights of the member who is being replaced.

## **CHILD CARE**

### **Australia**

The Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance (Australia) has negotiated with one of its major employers for out of hours child care expenses to be paid by the employer. This only applies to child care expenses outside normal rostered hours.

The clause is reproduced below:

#### **22 Out of Hours Child Care Expenses**

22.1 The Company will pay an employee for out of hours child care expenses in circumstances where:

- (a) the employee is required to work outside their rostered hours of work; and
- (b) this requirement is agreed to in advance by the staff member's editor.

**22.2 The employee's entitlement relates only to the "additional" cost incurred as a result of working outside their rostered hours. Employees will be required to provide reasonable proof of additional costs incurred.**

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

The Malaysian journalists' union has incorporated into its agreements, clauses to discourage sexual harassment:

### **COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT 1999-2002 NATIONAL UNION OF JOURNALISTS MALAYSIA - UTUSAN MELAYU**

**(Translation from Bahasa Malaysia)**

#### **Appendix 8 SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

The Management and the Union shall co-operate in solving any matter pertaining to sexual harassment at the workplace and disciplinary action to be taken according to the Company's procedures.

## **SPECIAL SERVICES FOR WOMEN**

### **Bangladesh**

There is an organisation in Bangladesh, funded by Danida, called the Bangladesh Centre for Development, Journalism and Communication (BCDJC). The BCDJC has undertaken a long-term programme in the field of women and journalism which includes the following activities:

- 1) Training for fresh women graduates.
- 2) Placement of women as interns under a Fellowship Programme in various news organisations for a year with a promise by that the organisation to employ them after the internship.
- 3) Higher level training by local and foreign trainers.
- 4) Exploring training opportunities abroad.
- 5) National and International networking.
- 6) Publication of a Guidebook for Women Newspersons.
- 7) Publication of newspaper where 50% staff would be women.
- 8) Mentoring and guidance service
- 9) Regular short (follow-up) courses.

A report on a recent survey conducted by BCDJC is attached.

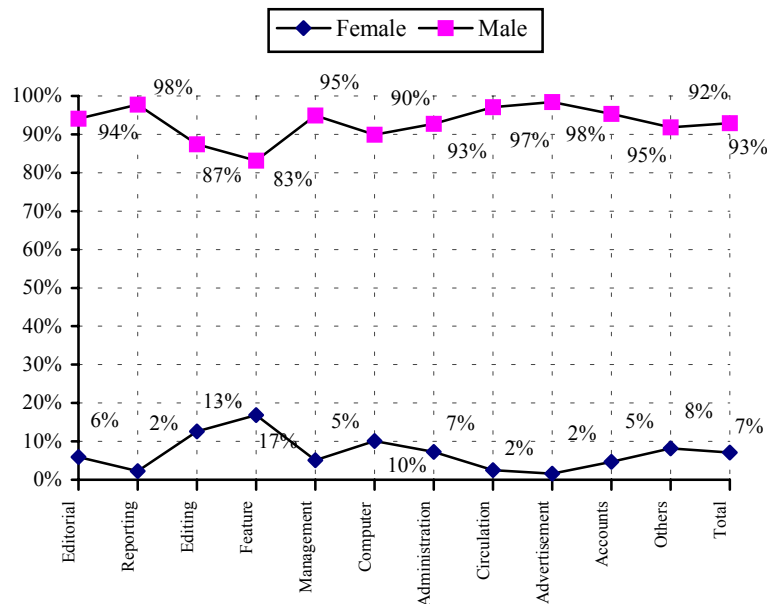
**Brief Report of Survey  
on  
WOMEN IN JOURNALISM  
in  
Dhaka, Bangladesh**

**Nayeemul Islam Khan  
BCDJC**

Under the ‘Women in Journalism’ programme we have conducted a survey with the following objectives:

- a) Find out the number of female journalists serving the leading newspapers.
- b) What positions are they occupying within the organisations.
- c) Can and do women participate in the process of decision-making.
- d) What are the principle problems women face in the journalism profession.
- e) How do they think, the prevailing situation can be ameliorated.

**Percentage Ratio of Male and Female in news organisations (Department wise) :**



The news organisations covered by the survey are as follows:

**Daily Newspapers (20) :**

The Bangladesh Observer, The Bangladesh Times, The New Nation, The Daily Star, The Independent, Ittefaq, Inqilab, Sangbad, Janakantha, Ajker Kagoj, Banglar Bani, Banglabazar Patrika, Bhorer Kagoj, Muktakantha, Dinkal, Janata, Khabor, Manavzamin, Meillat and Shakaler Khabor.

**Periodicals (3) :**

Anannya, Prokriti and Robbar

**News Agencies (5) :**

Associated Press of Bangladesh (APB), Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS), United News of Bangladesh (UNB Bangla), United News of Bangladesh (UNB English) and Probe.

The methodology of the survey was very simple. A questionnaire of 51 questions was developed in Bangla and all the women newsmen available were approached to fill it up. However, only from the news organisations mentioned above. We are happy that almost all of them, approached, did fill up the questionnaire. We have received 69 questionnaire returned to us.

The survey found that there are only 7 percent women employees in the news organisations. and just about 4 percent were newsmen.

Among the women newsmen, highest 17 percent are feature writers, 13 percent in subbing, 6 percent in editorial and only 2 percent in reporting. We found only one women press photographer in Dhaka among those leading news organisations.

### **Graph 1 (B)**

Most of the women newsmen are very young. 39 percent are 20 plus, 30 percent 30 plus, 15 percent 40 plus and only 6 percent of the 50 plus age group. Only 1 percent is 60 plus while 9 percent didn't mention their age.

Strikingly 80 percent of the women newsmen have Masters Degree and 13 percent of them have their Masters in Journalism. About 17 percent of the women newsmen were graduates and only 3 percent with Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC).

Many (47%) of the women newsmen have received some on the job training while majority (53%) of them did never get any such opportunity. However, the trainings received by women newsmen were in most cases odd as 80 percent of them receiving training as reporters 94 percent of them actually are work as sub-editors. Only 6 percent of the women newsmen trained in reporting worked as reporters.

It was observed in a closer inquiry that the very few who have received overseas training or a few more who have travelled abroad have demonstrated more confidence and achieved comparatively more success in the profession.

We could enlist 79 women newsmen in 20 daily newspapers that we have surveyed. There were 6 women newsmen in 3 periodicals and 10 in the 5 news agencies.

Among the daily Bangla newspapers, Muktakantha, one of the most recent newspapers employ the highest number of women newsmen, which is 21. In contrast the oldest Bangla daily Ittefaq has only one women newsmen.

Among the daily English newspapers Daily Star a relatively new publication the highest 8 women newsmen and the oldest The Bangladesh Observer employs only one.

According to available-unofficial information some of these women newsmen included in our 79 member list are just contributors, not regular employees. The informations of some others monthly salary sometimes prove that they are not paid according to the designation they hold. It suggests that they are not as important as the designation implies.

Among the 20 national dailies there were no women in the status of an assistant editor. The highest positions are page editorships for education page, women page, magazine, district news page (in just few cases), only one shift-in-charge and one

Feature Editor and a few editorial assistants. There are only two Assistant Editors in two dailies which are not so significant. And a further closer inquiry suggested these two women newsmen are not treated properly in the editorial team of the newspaper. This process the presence of a glass ceiling at a very alarmingly low level.

Finally the finding appears to prove that women newsmen are absent in the significant decision making positions of our leading newspapers in Dhaka. So there is no question of their participation in the significant decision making level other than editing 'not so important pages'.

The 29 percent of the respondents have told that they have to work more than their male colleague for success in profession. About 24 percent believe that they have to face obstacles which their male counterpart don't face.

They identify (with percentage of respondents complaining ) the obstacles as follows:

- a) Disregard by male towards female (45%)
- b) Non co-operation at office (20%)
- c) Transport/Movement (20%)
- d) Bad/Objectionable remarks by colleagues (7%)
- e) Balancing professional and family responsibility (8%)

33 percent of the respondent complained about harassment in office. The nature of which with percentage of women complaining are as follows:

- a) Non co-operation of the authority or colleague (30.95%)
- b) Mental/Social/Environmental Harassment (28.57%)
- c) Discrimination (19.04%)
- d) Objectionable remarks/proposals (11.9%)
- e) Others (9.52%)

The problems identified by respondents in pursuing career in print media journalism with percentage of women referring to it are as follows:

- a) Negative Attitude and Discrimination (30.57%)
- b) Transport/Movement/Communication (18.18%)
- c) Non-co-operation in Office (10.74%)
- d) Managing Family (10.74%)
- e) Lack of Security or Lack of sense of Security (9.91%)
- f) Social Restrictions (5.58%)
- g) Problems with self (5.58%)
- h) Others (8.26%)

Of the respondents, 45.61 percent respondents think they have sacrificed at least something of significance for the sake of the profession. 96.78 percent respondents have never received any award or simple appreciation 37.28 percent feel sorrow and pain being in the profession. Yet 98.27 percent of the respondents believe journalism will be benefited if more women join the profession. 91.67 percent of the women newsmen are not afraid to continue in the profession and 83.61 percent do not regret being committed in the profession. About 87.93% respondents think they enjoy freedom in making decision.

Of them 59.61 percent of them will never leave this profession while 13.46% are ready to leave for a better financial package and 11.53% for more secured job.

All the respondents have dreams in the profession. 55.35% want to become a capable journalist. 23.21% want to do something for the people. 14.28% dream to become an editor of daily newspaper.

18 percent thinks Reporting is the most suitable job for them while 18 percent thinks editorial and only 1 percent photojournalists. Among the rest 34 percent considers subbing their best place and 28 percent likes Feature Writing.

The respondents have suggested many things as to how amelioration in the situation of women in journalism can be achieved.

Of the respondents, 17.05% have suggested more and more training and helping women become confident and serious. 10.85% recommended improvements in the working environment of news organisations and others. 7.75% requested stopping discrimination. 6.20% highlighted the importance of changed social attitude, raised awareness/consciousness and co-operation from all.

More specifically 31.14% respondents recommended Diploma/Degree/ Internships/Training etc. for the women newsmen; 18.03% suggested the importance of good working conditions/environment; 4.09% recommended quota for women in journalism jobs; 13.11% advised Awareness Raising Programmes. And 11.47% suggested to introduce special Award/Appreciation/Encouragement for Women Newsmen.

---

Nayeemul Islam Khan: President, Bangladesh Centre for Development, Journalism and Communication (BCDJC); Former editor the Daily Aker Kagoj, The Daily Bhorer Kagoj, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

## **India**

Women journalists in India have recently formed the Network of Women in Media – India (NWMI).

A first national workshop on/for Indian women in journalism was held in January 2002 at New Delhi. An average of 100 women journalists participated in the workshop, including approximately 60 from 16 cities/centres in 14 states. Among the participants were journalists working in at least a dozen languages. At the end of the workshop NWMI was formed.

The NWMI will be democratic and work for gender justice. It will not enter into partnership with any organisation, which will jeopardise its independence. It will not be used to promote any anti-secular, anti-women agenda.

The basic aims and objectives of the network were determined as follows (draft to be further refined):

1. To consolidate, support and strengthen women in media.
2. To promote media awareness/critique.
3. To promote professionalism and ethical journalism.
4. To share information and resources.

It was decided that the network would work with existing professional bodies, where possible and necessary, to fulfill the above aims and objectives.

## WOMEN ON UNION GOVERNING BODIES

### Australia

The rules of the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance (Australia) stipulate that women must occupy a certain number of the union's elected positions (both at a branch and national level). This means that if there are multiple positions (three or more) to be elected, then a specified number of those positions must be occupied by women. The numbers that must be women range from one third to one fifth of the positions.

There is a table in the rules specifying the number of women to be elected based on the number of positions up for election.

For example, there are three Federal Vice Presidents which are called for election every two years. Of these three Vice Presidents, **at least** one must be a woman.

The rule does not prevent women from occupying more of those positions. However, using the above example of the three Federal Vice Presidents, if two women and five men were nominated, then all candidates would go to a vote but at least one of the women would be declared elected, even if she received less votes than three or more of the men.

The rule was introduced in the 1980s and has ensured that women have played a prominent role in the running of the union.

The relevant section of the rules is reproduced below.

#### Notice of Elections

- (c) The Returning Officer shall:
- (1) In each uneven-numbered year for honorary positions and in each second uneven-numbered year for full-time positions (or when appropriate in the case of a casual vacancy), circulate a notice to all financial members or take such other measures as are necessary calling for nominations of financial members of the Association entitled to nominate in accordance with these rules as candidates for election as:
    - (i) Federal President
    - (ii) Federal President (AJA) (to be elected by members of the AJA Section)
    - (iii) Federal President (Actors Equity) (to be elected by members of the Equity Section)
    - (iv) Federal President (ATAEA) (to be elected by members of the Theatrical Section)
    - (v) Federal President (Musicians) (to be elected by members of the Musicians Section)
    - (vi) Federal Vice Presidents (3)
    - (vii) Federal Secretary
    - (viii) Assistant Federal Secretaries (2)
    - (ix) Branch President
    - (x) Branch Vice Presidents (3)
    - (xi) Branch Secretaries

- (xii) Assistant Branch Secretaries (Where determined by the Federal Council)
- (xiii) Delegates from the Sections of the Association to Federal Council (the number to be determined by Rule 80)
- (xiv) Delegates from the Sections of the Association to Branch Council (the number to be determined by Rule 80)
- (xv) Ethics Panel members (21) (Journalists Section)
- (xvi) Deleted
- (xvii) National Stunt Committee 12 (Equity Section Stunt performer 4, Stunt co-ordinator 4, Safety Supervisor members 4)

(2) The notice shall stipulate that a member cannot stand for more than one of each of the positions specified in sub-rule (c), excepting that a member nominating for a Branch Council position other than Branch President or Branch Secretary or where relevant Assistant Branch Secretary, may also nominate for the position of Section Delegate to Federal Council.

**(3) The notice shall further stipulate that where there are three or more positions to be filled in any election (other than those applying to the Professional Sports Section or Professional Sports Branch) one of each three of the positions shall be filled by a woman according to the following formula:**

- 3 - 5 positions: at least one woman**
- 6 - 8 positions: at least two women**
- 9 - 11 positions: at least three women**
- 12 - 14 positions: at least four women**
- 15 - 17 positions: at least five women**

## **East Timor**

The Timor Lorosa'e Journalists' Association is the journalists' union in East Timor. The union has recently been seeking an executive officer and were concerned that there were no women on their executive committee. They have advertised the position and included in the advertisement "Women are strongly encouraged to apply."

The text of the advertisement is reproduced below.

## **POSITION VACANT**

### **Executive Director**

The Timor Lorosa'e Journalists Association is seeking a dynamic, self-motivated organizer to take up the position of Executive Director.

The successful applicant will be fluent in English and Indonesian and already have experience in management. Strong communications skills, both written and oral, are required for this position as the executive director will liaise with the membership, journalists, media organisations and the broader community. Reporting to the board, the executive director will be able to work without direct supervision and will be required to supervise staff.

The executive director will undertake a broad range of activities including organising events, fund-raising, proposal-writing and from time to time representing the association in meetings. While a background in journalism is not a prerequisite, a high level of interest in the media and associated issues such as freedom of expression and a strong commitment to meeting deadlines are key attributes.

Computer skills including knowledge of databases, Excel and Microsoft Word are also highly desirable.

The contract will be for an initial 12 months.

Written applications including curriculum vitae and contact details should be delivered to the TLJA Secretariat, Konsortium Grafika, Jl Kaicoli, Dili, by April .... Short-listed candidates will be notified by telephone. Applicants are encouraged to collect a job description available from the Secretariat.

Further information is available from .... on ....

**Women are encouraged to apply.**

The Timor Lorosa'e Journalists Association is a non-government organisation working to enhance the professional interests of journalists.

## **WOMEN'S COMMITTEES, GENDER COUNCILS, EQUITY COUNCILS**

### **Germany**

The German Journalists' Federation (DJV) introduced a National Gender and Working Time Council as part of its structure in 1994. The Council is one of 12 councils established within the union to deal with specific issues. It has 16 members (both women and men) and meets five times per year.

It was thought important to link gender issues with working time, so that the gender issue was not sidelined but connected to both female and male interests of balancing work and family.

The National Gender and Working Time Council replaced a commission that dealt with gender issues. The establishment of the National Gender and Working Time Council as a council was important as commissions are ad hoc committees in the DJV, while councils have permanent status.

Part of the Council's role is to provide a gender/working time perspective on the negotiation of collective agreements. To do this it puts forwards claims for various benefits including parental leave and flexible working hours. It also organises conferences on these issues and deal with gender issues in specific companies and in cooperation with the federal ministry for women. It is particularly organising regular national conferences for women journalists "Woman-Power-Media" ("Frau-Macht-Medien"). The National Gender and Working Time Council also encourages the representation of women in committees and decision making positions in the DJV itself.

The National Gender and Working Time Council is also working on a more responsible care for gender issues and a more powerful representation of women in the committees of the union itself.

### **India**

From 1996 onwards the Women Committee in India has been trying to consolidate the professionals in the country. The main concentration is on conducting seminars, symposiums and get-to-gathers in various states initially. In few states Women Committees are forming as part of the union. In any state i.e., Andhra Pradesh where more than six thousand journalists are working in various media houses union is nominating two women representatives to the executive.

### **Japan**

The Japan Federation of Newspaper Workers' Unions (JFNWU) is the federation of 86 company unions, with approximately 3,000 members. The JFNWU has a Youth and Female part. The manager is a member of the central executive committee. The Youth and Female part representation committee meets several times per year and discusses the annual activity and event schedule.

A women's meeting is also included in a typical annual event. It was held in April in 2002 in Toyama Prefecture, with 84 people participating in the women's meeting from the whole country. The meeting included a commemoration lecture and a subcommittee on the theme of various

problems of the woman who works to newspaper industry. The meeting performed information exchange and have a small party to introduce each other.

## APPENDIX 1

### REGIONAL GENDER EQUITY WORKSHOP KUALA LUMPUR 6-7 JULY 2002 PARTICIPANTS

<b><u>NAME</u></b>	<b>COUNTRY</b>
Norila Mohd Daud	Malaysia
Ang Chia Ling	Malaysia
Khairunnisia Wan Hussein	Malaysia
Sukhinder Kaur	Malaysia
Worawee Woowanich	Thailand
Pranee Srikamneard	Thailand
Fitri Wulandari	Indonesia
Mega Christina	Indonesia
Sary Bossokol	Cambodia
Cerilia Amelia de Sousa Saldanha	East Timor
Sook-Lyol Yu	Korea
Chin - Wen Shih	Taiwan
Vivian Chang	Taiwan
Jui-yi Liao	Taiwan
Chun-yu Lin	Taiwan
Vicky Tien	Taiwan
Siu-lan Law	Hong Kong
Hasebe Hisano	Japan
K Manjari	India
Sarjana Sharna	India
Nirmala Acharya	Nepal
Ruwanthi Kariyawasam	Sri Lanka
Rosanne Therese	Sri Lanka
Salvacion Espina-Varona	Philippines
Emma Walters	Australia
Jacqui Park	Australia
Nadine Flood	Australia
Annegret Witt-Barthel	Germany

## APPENDIX 2

### Empowering Women for Change: Regional Gender Equity Workshop 6-7 July 2002, Kuala Lumpur

#### Strategy/Action Plan

Issue	Goal	Target	Strategy
Lack of promotion for women	To increase the number of women in middle and senior grades and senior management positions.	Employers, unions	<p><u>Individual unions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual unions to wage collective action for percentage quotas of women in each grade and/or</li> <li>• Campaign for a Gender Ombudsperson and/or</li> <li>• Increase representation of women in promotions boards.</li> </ul> <p><u>IFJ:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring the proportion of women in different grades in different countries.</li> </ul>
Weak unions can't win on gender issues	Strengthen IFJ affiliates in the region.	Unions	<p><u>Individual Unions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set specific targets to increase the number of members; number of union activists; number of women members in the union.</li> <li>• Develop organising campaigns to strengthen women's participation in the union.</li> </ul> <p><u>Regional IFJ:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to increase the number of new unions.</li> </ul>
Lack of equal pay	<u>Long-term:</u> Equal pay to be mandated for all countries in the region.	Government, employers and unions	<p><u>Individual Unions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In countries that do not have equal pay for women, IDFJ affiliates to</li> </ul>

			<p>develop a campaign.</p> <p><u>IFJ:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue global equal pay campaign.</li> </ul>
Lack of insurance (universal health, accident, death, unemployment and pension benefits)	<p><u>Long-term:</u> Universal insurance</p> <p><u>Short-term:</u> To have insurance provisions included in collective agreements or legislated, where possible, over next two years.</p>	Employers, government and unions	<p><u>Individual Unions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Campaign for insurance provisions in the collective bargaining agreements.</li> <li>• Work with other industry unions and campaign jointly for national provisions.</li> </ul>
Sexual Harassment	<p><u>Long-term:</u> sexual harassment – free work environment</p> <p><u>Short-term:</u> reduce the number of sexual harassment incidents in the workplace</p>	Government, employers, unions, co-workers	<p><u>Regional IFJ</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a code of conduct for eliminating sexual harassment in the workplace and within the unions in the region.</li> <li>• Survey affiliates about successful campaigns against sexual harassment.</li> <li>• Produce multi-lingual educational material for use in unions and workplaces.</li> </ul> <p><u>Individual Unions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt the code of conduct for eliminating sexual harassment in the workplace and within the unions.</li> </ul>
Lack of women in the profession	<p><u>Long-term:</u> equal representation of women in the profession.</p> <p><u>Short-term:</u> increase the number of women recruited as journalists by 10 per cent in the next two years.</p>	Employers, unions, government, women interested in the profession	<p><u>Individual Unions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Push for fixed quotas of new women journalists.</li> <li>• Promote recognition of employers that support equal employment and provide equal opportunities for promotion of women.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek government support for such employers (ie by tax rebates or other mechanisms).</li> </ul> <p><u>Regional IFJ:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Campaign governments of affected countries to promote recognition of equal employment for women in journalism.</li> </ul>
Workplaces not family friendly	<p><u>Long-term:</u> family friendly workplaces for <u>all</u> workers.</p> <p><u>Short-term:</u> increase number of journalists benefiting from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport home at night;</li> <li>• Maternity/Paternity leave;</li> <li>• Childcare allowances or onsite childcare;</li> <li>• Working hours to be reliable yet flexible to accommodate family responsibilities.</li> </ul>	Employers, Government and unions	<p><u>Individual Unions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate family friendly conditions into collective negotiations.</li> <li>• Lobby government for changes to the laws to support family friendly conditions in the workplace.</li> <li>• Initiate joint-campaigns with unions in other industries.</li> </ul> <p><u>IFJ:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a resource pack with examples of best practice family friendly clauses for unions to use.</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX 3

### The 24<sup>th</sup> Congress of the IFJ, meeting in Seoul from June 11-15<sup>th</sup>, 2001,

- *Commends the work of the Women's Working Party;*
- *Instructs the Executive Committee to expand the activities of the working party (now called Gender Council), particularly through the regional structures of the IFJ and within its project programme.*
- *Adopts the following*

#### *Plan of Action*

##### *1. Women in Journalism*

###### ***Action:***

*The Gender Council must prepare an overview of best practice examples used by unions to increase the number of women in decision-making positions in media. Such a survey should focus on best practice examples on equality provisions achieved in collective bargaining.*

*This should include best practice in collective agreements on:*

- *parental leave;*
- *Social protection;*
- *Working time;*
- *Models for reconciling work and family responsibilities;*
- *Promotion;*
- *Access to training.*

*The IFJ should support implementation of best practice examples through trade union training and other seminars. National unions should ensure that the best practice examples are being made into demands in their own national collective bargaining and report to the IFJ about implementation of the best practice examples. The Gender Council should develop a code of conduct for women media managers.*

##### *2. Women in the Union*

*There is no overall agreement among unions whether special structures for women, allocation of seats or quota systems are the way to improve representation and participation of women in the union.*

###### ***Action:***

*The Gender Council should prepare a review of women's committees and systems setting targets for female representation explaining if and how these structures have contributed to improving participation of women in the union. National unions should use the survey to create women's committees and systems setting targets for female representation and report to the IFJ on the creation of these structures. The IFJ should sensitise women to take up leadership positions through special training programmes and activities.*

Congress determines that the IFJ Executive Committee should prepare an Annual Plan directed to women journalism to promote principles and values of trades unionism.

3. Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value: An Issue for the Union and the IFJ

**Action:**

The Gender Council should initiate a campaign on equal pay. The campaign should be organised at regional and national level and should focus on achieving equal pay for women in practice. The IFJ should prepare a best practice survey on equal pay and circulate the information to member unions for action at national level.

Each region should nominate a campaign co-ordinator.

Asia-Pacific: IFJ Project Office

North America: TNG-CWA

Latin America: IFJ Regional Office

Africa: WAJA, EAJA, SAJA

Europe: EFJ

The IFJ should co-ordinate the campaign with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (representing the trade union centres). Campaign targets should include regular salary reviews with employers; consultation rights for unions on payment grades and promoting best practice in collective agreements. The campaign should be supported by practical seminars and meetings.

The IFJ should assist unions to develop national strategies and campaigns that are tailored to the specific needs in the country. The campaign should aim to achieve implementation in practice of all key ILO conventions safeguarding women's rights.

4. Portrayal of Women in the Media

**Action:**

The Gender Council should co-operate with other groups working on portrayal of women in the media. An IFJ initiative will focus on collecting unions' experience with reporting guidelines and promoting the use of such guidelines in journalism training. The IFJ should prepare materials to assist unions to address the issue of portrayal in pursuit of fair and balanced reporting.

5. IFJ Women Network

An e-mail network of IFJ women exists but it must be expanded and it should be co-ordinated at regional level by the IFJ offices and regional federations.

**Action:**

The e-mail network should form the basis for the Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value Campaign. Each region should nominate a co-ordinator of the e-mail network. The Gender Council should be responsible for overall co-ordination of the e-mail network. The IFJ secretariat and regional offices should ensure that all information

*concerning IFJ events, activities and actions are circulated on the women network to ensure full participation of women.*

#### 6. Women in the IFJ

**Action:**

*Congress calls on the IFJ unions to nominate female delegates for positions in the IFJ Executive Committee. Congress instructs the new Executive Committee to develop a strategy in co-operation with the Gender Council to ensure that women's issues will form an integral part in all IFJ activity. Equality must be included in all issues debated by Congress.*

#### 7. Access to Training

*The IFJ Women Working Party should develop strategies for unions to improve access to training for women journalists. This should include access to initial journalism training, access to further training and access to specialised training. The IFJ should form alliances with universities, schools of journalism, training centres etc. to reach out to young women.*

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Workshop Papers**

**SARJANA SHARMA (INDIA)**  
**Associate Producer**  
**Zee News (24 hour News Channel)**

**MEMBER, DELHI JOURNALIST ASSOCIATION (A Unit of NUJ-India)**

Equal Pay and Conditions : the fight behind our achievements and what way forward.

The last decade of the 20th Century has been eventful for the Media in India. In an increasingly gender conscious professional world women are marching forward and enhancing their profile. Women in the Media enjoy comparatively clean image. Their track record is better in terms of quality and honesty. Women's share of jobs in the Print and Electronic Media has been increasing. They are not restricted to fashion cookery, art and culture only. They are covering war, riots, crime, politics and business. Women journalists have been reporting from the battlefield, Stock market and Parliament's press gallery. Two decades ago these were restricted areas for Women Journalists. Women have changed the face of Journalism to some extent. They have given a broader base to Journalism. Health, Environment social issues, Art and culture and Women issues have become important mainstream issues, whereas male Journalists are more focussed on political issues. Things have changed a lot in the last two decades and have certainly changed for better. A few women Journalists are at the top positions in the English Journalism. Majority of women journalists are employed at the Junior, Middle and feature Editor level. A few women journalists are at the top and decisive positions in English Journalism.

Vernacular Press is also changing slowly. Recently a well known T.V. and Print Journalist Mrs. Mrinal Pandey has been appointed Editor of Hindi daily News paper. She is the first women Editor of National daily. In English Newspapers and Magazines many women are holding several important posts. Women participation and visibility in Media has increased in comparison to 60s and 70's. But this does not mean that, it is roses all the way the women's path is thorny also. There are many things which remain unchanged.

The fact remains that Media is dominated by Male not only in India but all over the world. In developed and developing nations media has always been male dominated. The studies carried out all over the world show how the media has been biased against women.

Equality between men and women by and large is there on papers, but the reality is different. In work situation women are not always allowed to function effectively. Their work is not recognized properly. There are different criteria of recognition of merit for men and women in job. This attitude leads to disparities in salaries and promotions.

Things are still better in English Press. Employment and salary patterns are according to the wage Board Recommendations. English press is implementing wage board recommendations. In the Indian language press women journalists have to face more difficulties and discrimination. In vernacular Media Women's participation remains largely affected and to a great extent marginalized.

I would like to make it clear that this scenario is not confined only to Media. It prevails in all fields with varying degrees. Traditionally women in India are held in high esteem the scriptures accord her a status and dignity un-parallel anywhere else in the world. Yet through the centuries her economic subjugation has led to legacy of discrimination. Media is not an exception. Despite all odds women journalists have made a dent for themselves in both print and electronic media. They have acquired eminence and in a number of cases have reached high positions.

Most Media organisations at National and Regional level claim to give equal pay for equal work.

Matters like better pay scale and better working conditions were already taken up by Journalists Trade union in 50's. First All India Organisation of Journalists came into being in 1950. Indian Federation of working journalists was organised. Its first achievement was persuading the Govt. to enact the working Journalist Act 1955. The Act also contemplated setting up of statutory wage Board from time to time to fix the wages of journalists. The first wage Board was constituted in 1959 and Report came in 1961. Likewise the second wage board was constituted in 1971 and Board submitted its report in 1973. Third wage board was constituted in 1975. It's report came in 1979. Fourth wage board was constituted in 1985 and Rajkumar Singh Manisana wage board was constituted in 1994 and finally it gave its recommendation in 2000. Most of the Media Houses at National and Regional level are implementing the decisions of successive wage boards. They claim to give equal pay for equal work. It could be presumed that men and women journalists at the Junior and middle level are paid equally. At higher level women Journalists get lesser salary than a man in the same job with the same amount of experience. Former correspondent of the Times of India (Major English daily published from Delhi, Mumbai and some other cities) conducted a survey on discrimination in remuneration in English and Indian languages press. Ms. Aditi Kapoor spoke to many Journalist and her report says:- "English press generally confirms to certain legal standards. This is not always the case with some sections of the Indian language press. Many English journalists complain about discrimination in salaries. There may be parity at the entry level but increments are more discriminatory. In many cases women get standard single raise and men get multiple increments."

Contract system in journalism is making things more difficult for women. Although contract means higher salaries than those recommended by the wage Boards. However bargaining in the salaries and perks play a major role. Men are able to negotiate hard and women are not very comfortable discussing money.

In the Urban Media most of the women journalists come from upper middle class and upper class. On the basis of my 17 years of experience in journalism print & electric both I can say that male journalists are of the opinion that women do not need to earn for living. My colleagues have openly told me many times. "What will you do with money, you have lots of money. Why do not you adopt us also."

This attitude is not limited to Media only. In other profession also women have to face this. Whatever the attitude but things are changing for better. In 1984 when I joined the mainstream journalism my salary was Rs.500 Per month. Now a days even an

intern gets Rs. 1500 per month and Trainee journalists are getting Rs. 7,000 to 10,000 thousand.

Women journalists in India have covered a long distance in the last 50 years. In 1950. The capital city New Delhi had only four women journalists KAMLA MANKEKAR joined The Times of India in 1950 and another English Daily Statesman had Raj Chawla and Amita Malik on its staff Promila Kalhan was working with The Hindustan Times (an English Daily). In 1960's also things had not changed. Usha Rai (A very eminent journalist) joined The Times of India in 1965. She was the only women on the Editorial staff. There was no provision for the maternity leave in the Rule book those days. Usha Rai was expecting a Special case had to be made out and a provision of three months maternity leave was made. In the same Times of India House some of the departments are wholly manned by Women. But now things have totally changed every Newspaper Magazine and Electronic Media House has provision for three months paid Maternity leave. In 1967 Razia Ismail joined The Indian Express. She is Informations, communication and External Relation chief UNICEF's Delhi office. Razia Ismail says "the roster of the day's events invariably had a flower show marked against her name. Our early years in the Delhi Newspaper area was the period which we can now recognise as a turning point for women as straight Newspersons."

In 1964 Prabha Dutt had to fight with the editor to get a job in the Hindustan Times. In 1965 she had to fight another battle to cover 1965 Indo-Pak war. She wanted to go to war front but editor put his foot down and she was told firmly she can not cover war. Prabha Dutt took leave from office and went to the war front. She started sending dispatches to the News Paper initially editor refused to accept them but soon stories began appearing in the News paper.

In the early seventies more women journalists joined mainstream Journalism.

In the seventies a substantial number of women began to actively seek careers in journalism in different parts of the Country. 70s was the decade of International Women's movement. 1975, the international year for women had an impact on Indian Urban Women also. Incidentally Internal emergency was declared in India the very same year in June. Emergency included press censorship also.

Press became far more vigorous and vigilant. Large number of women joined the press during this period. Socio-political issues dominated this period. Women wanted to contribute to the social and political Transformation. Many women journalists entering the profession this time were associated with women's movement, human rights civil liberties movements, and various grassroots movements for social and economic justice. women went out of their way to provide effective and wide coverage to these issues. They earned a reputation for themselves. Many of them are now holding high posts in various dailies and magazines. Journalist Kalpana Sharma and Ammu Joseph did a study of the coverage of women issues in the press for a period of 10 years i.e. from 1978 to 1987. Ammu Joseph has written in her book "women in journalism making News", "Kalpana Sharma and I found that the presence of women in strategic positions within the press at that time often made a substantial difference to the coverage of such issues."

This period saw many women breaking into the high prestige area of hard news reporting. Journalists like Seema Guha, Seema Mustafa, Anita Pratap, Radhika Rameshan, Rita Sarin, Shiraz Sidhwa, Tavleen Singh and others are widely recognised for their reportage from the hot spots in and around the country. Journalists like Neerja Chowdhary, Smita Gupta, Coomi Kapoor, Kalyani Shankar, Vidya Subramaniam, Neena Vyas, Amrita Abraham, Olga Tellis, Shikha Mukherjee Rashida Bhagat and Malini Parthsarthy made name for themselves in the field of Political Reporting or analysis or both.

In these 10 years Women made a place for themselves and established themselves in the profession. There was a magazine boom also during that period, it opened many avenues for women 60's, 70's and eighties worked hard to prepare the ground for the young generation. 1990 onwards number of women journalists has been increasing, manifold working conditions are better.

In major dailies women are executive Editor, Joint Editor, resident Editor, Deputy Editor, Political Editor, business Editor, many assistant Editors, News Editors, Chief reporters and Chief of bureaus, and chief Sub Editors. Presence of such a large number of women in Journalism at prestigious positions has changed many things for Women.

Press itself has undergone major changes in the Nineties due to Liberalisation, Globalisation, Satellite Television and Consumerism. Journalists are getting handsome salaries and perks.

Women have made valuable contributions to the press. Their image is positive. Their visibility is increasing in the main stream Journalism. Many women Journalists still experience slow progress in their careers. Women journalists are of the opinion that problem requires institutional attention. Structure and system of media organisation have to be made systemic and structural adjustments in work schedules.

In the 20th Century women journalists have crossed many barriers and hurdles in the profession in India. And they hope new millennium will bring a brighter future for them.

SARJANA SHARMA is a Senior Journalist working in New Delhi since 1984. She has worked with Print Media for 11 years. After that She switched over to Electronic Media. Now a days she is an Associate producer with Zee News (A 24 Hour T.V. Channel)

## **Women Journalists in a Changing Media World**

**By Ms K Manjari. National Council Member, Indian Journalists Union**

Structural changes and technological developments in the media are changing the situation of women journalists. While new private media especially television have offered women journalists new employment possibilities, job cuts in the public sector often hit women journalists harder than their male colleagues.

### **Indian situation**

In India there is a peculiar situation, the wage boards setup for print media is not applicable to electronic media. In addition to this contract system prevailing where there is no job guarantee causing lot of unrest in the profession. For example one of the top newspaper in India is having professionals only on contract basis not on roles. This situation gradually leads the media as an industry and news making became a commodity. Industrialists, Sugar barons, liquor kings and mafia are entering into this to protect their own selfish interests in the shade of media.

Access of women to the journalism profession has definitely increased over the last years. But it remains a fact that women do not stay in journalism as long as men and do not make it to the same levels in the hierarchy of the profession. Family responsibilities, employment practices and lack of access to further training are some of the reasons why women have not yet reached their full potential in the profession.

Press in India comprises more than 19,500 newspapers and periodicals of which 1,300 are dailies. The Indian print medium can boast of distinction in the world for the fact that it is published in 84 languages.

Women form a microscopic proportion of the total number of journalists in the country. With the concentration of the print medium in urban and semi-urban centres, women journalists are also restricted to these areas.

An encouraging development in the younger crop of women journalists is that they have refused to confine themselves to reporting trivial or the traditional topics or doing the standard interviews and 'sob stuff' features. Women journalists seem to be out to prove themselves every bit as resourceful and enterprising in their job as their male colleagues.

### **Biases in recruitment**

Editors and proprietors, with a few exceptions, make no bones about their skepticism regarding the capabilities of women in their editorial departments. Privately, they do not hesitate to admitting that they do discriminate against women in recruiting journalists. Out of more than 19,000 newspapers in the country, there may not be even a handful who recruit women willingly, based on merit.

A woman aspiring to become a journalists has two ways of getting into a newspaper office – (1) use influence by pulling strings in the right places; or (2) find a newspaper that wants to don the modern mask – it will have place for one or two women, not more. Rarely is a woman journalist recruited on merit.

The first hurdle in the way of a woman aspiring to becoming a full-time journalist is the entry into a newspaper. Even if a woman tops the selection test and the interview, she will not be considered: this is the official policy of one of the leading publishing houses in South India. The usual reasons attributed for following such a policy are that women make a 'nuisance' or cause 'social problems' in the organization; that they cannot do night shifts or late hour reporting; that they do not have the mobility so essential for a reporter; that they will quit the job on getting married; if already married then she will invariably go on maternity leave; if a woman already has children, then she cannot devote her complete attention to her job; that she will start demanding, if recruited, such privileges as a separate toilet room; that they are likely to encourage romantic notions in men and thus would affect their work if women were recruited as journalists. In other words, women are discriminated against indirectly.

The most common reasons given by managements for not taking women is that the latter cannot do night duty (if sub-editors), cannot do late hour reporting (if single) with the result that the 'investment' of the management in them is a loss; if already married but without children, they will inevitably need to be given maternity leave, or if having children, they will not give their job the attention required.

### **In promotions**

Only a handful of women have risen to responsible positions through merit. Women editors, especially of women and children's magazines with exceptions, are in that position for reasons other than merit. Women are recruited if at all, as sub-editors and not as reporters as reporting is considered 'strenuous' and 'tough' and editing at the desk 'ideal'. And sub-editors are not put on night shift on 'humanitarian' grounds or because 'social problems' might arise. The point is, women who want to share equal responsibility with their male colleagues are not allowed to do so and later, are accused of being the 'privileged class' in the organization. This also forms the basis for refusing to recruit women in the organization.

Generally, there is no discrimination in salary because the Wage Board scales apply to everyone. But a few women complained that as trainees (before being confirmed or regularized) they were given less stipend than the male trainees and their services regularized much late than those of the male trainees. Women are also thought to be more hard working, efficient, conscientious and sometimes, more knowledgeable than men. But they are also considered to be sticklers for timings, refuse to stay over-time; considered to be more sensitive and burst into tears at the slightest provocation, or even without it. The number of women in a newspaper rarely exceeds five. This is very much in regional language press. Worse still, some papers recruit women only to claim to be modern in their outlook.

One welcoming feature is the newcomer to the profession. They have fewer inhibitions, are outgoing and enterprising. They are keen on making a career of journalism. Magazines have opened more vistas for women journalists. They also offer brighter future for women Journalists than newspapers.

### **Portrayal by the media**

Media being one of the traditional strongholds upholding status quo in a conservative society like India, it is only natural that women get a raw deal at their hands both in the matter of employment in the media and their portrayal by the media.

Men dominate the media scene both as producers and consumers. Readers of newspapers and magazines are mostly men. 95 per cent of film and TV viewers are men; similarly is the case with radio listeners, too. The number of women producers of film and TV programmes is very small women constitute only 2 per cent of class I officers in Government-owned AIR (All India Radio). Women journalists in print media are a microscopic number. Although the images of women as reflected by the mass media in the country are not very different, it will be an interesting exercise to study each medium and pinpoint the characteristics of the portrayals and also study how these images feed and reinforce the stereotypes propagated by these media.

The general apathy among the newspapers and periodicals to women's issues has given way to awareness and better coverage. Unlike earlier, when women, their issues or problems never figured on the front page of a newspaper unless it was a gruesome murder or a case of bride-burning, today women are more 'visible' in the mainstream media, where they figure 'side by side with the old sexist images, the stereotypes and the back page pin ups.'

A few newspapers carry women's page which is again the beauty tips recipes-fashions syndrome with an occasional serious article thrown in. If for some reasons, often due to ads encroaching into the news space, more often than not it is the serious article that is sacrificed in the belief that 'light' pieces go down well with the readers.

It is the same case with the general interest and news magazines – a dash of progressive writing on women's issues offset by pieces that ridicule women in their humour columns and cartoons, or a malicious comment on the women's movement, a woman in political or VIPs. Women's journals are mostly elitist or in a few cases, blatantly sexist, promoting a value system that views women as commodities, created to serve the men. With its reach extended into rural areas, television can play a crucial role in instilling confidence and self-respect in rural women (and urban women) and help them in securing a dignified and rightful place in society.

But the mass media are guilty of acting as agents of the status quo of women – they have taken on the role of the fundamentalists. To make up for this singular lack of social consciousness the media can restore the self-esteem to women and go a long way in promoting the cause of women by abandoning the gross misuse and exploitation of the woman as a sex symbol or as the much glorified sacrificing wife/mother/sister.

Mass media like TV, radio and films, apart from the family and school, have a role to play as catalysts of social change. The task is so immense that it seems forbidding. The first step to achieving the goal would be to clear the way of all obstacles. These are the prejudices, tradition and stereotypes regarding the role of women in society that have entrenched deeply in the minds of the people. This first step, undoubtedly, is the most difficult one.

### **In unions**

A consistent effort of media people in India for a period of a decade women committee formed separately. Series of meeting held in this regard with the help of International Federation of Journalists (I.F.J.).

The women in media is facing problems like recruitment policy of the managements, promotions, job segregation, training and development, working conditions, maternity

leave, child care, sexual harassment, equal employment opportunities and the role and perception of the union.

Recruitment of women is very small in number. For the last one decade it is increasing when compared to earlier. From 1996 onwards the Women Committee in India is trying to consolidate the professionals in the country. The main concentration is on conducting seminars, symposiums and get-to-gathers in various states initially. In few states Women Committees are forming as part of union. In any state i.e., Andhra Pradesh where more than six thousand journalists are working in various media houses union is nominating two women representatives to the executive.

Still women participation in union activities is not so encouraging. Women in lead positions are dismal. Additional burden of household work restricts them to participate in union activities and the male colleagues in lead positions confine women to the office only.

### **National workshop on women in journalism**

First national workshop on/for Indian women in journalism held in January 2002 at New Delhi. An average of 100 women journalists participated in the workshop, including approximately 60 from 16 cities/centers in 14 states. Among the participants were journalists working in at least a dozen languages. At the end of the workshop Network of Women in Media-India (NWMI) was formed.

The NWMI will be democratic and work for gender justice. It will not enter into partnership with any organization, which will jeopardize its independence. It will not be used to promote any anti-secular, anti-women agenda.

❖ The basic aims and objectives of the network were determined as follows (draft to be further refined):

1. To consolidate, support and strengthen women in media
2. To promote media awareness/critique
3. To promote professionalism and ethical journalism
4. To share information and resources

❖ It was decided that the network would work with existing professional bodies, where possible and necessary, to fulfill the above aims and objectives.

As women journalists, we need to make a place for ourselves in this highly male-dominated profession. We are not going to be satisfied with the tokenism of today.

As we speak for each other, we will speak up for ourselves too, we will find strength in our sisterhood, and work out a plan of action to struggle for change, both in our profession, and in the society around us. We will work for a new order for women journalists in which we will get our just share, and a new order in which under privileged will yet their just share.

\*\*\*

## **Women in Journalist Union In Indonesia**

### **By Fitri Wulandari, Aliansi Jurnalis Independen**

Journalist unions hardly touch gender issues. This is evident to the fact that there is no women committee journalists union, even in house unions.

Low number of women journalists contributes to this condition. According to 2000 survey by L.N Idayani (a journalist at Tempo Magazine and AJI's Presidium Member) the number of women journalist range 12 to 13 percent of overall Indonesian journalists.

In addition, very few women journalists participate in journalists union. However, not many of them sit in the committee. The Alliance of Indonesian Journalists Jakarta Chapter said that of 20 house journalists union in Jakarta, only one union has a woman as the chairperson.

Low participation of women coupled with low number of women journalists has made gender issues somewhat left out by journalist unions.

Similar conditions also apply in the Alliance of Indonesian Journalists. Quota system to ensure women participation in AJI is not applied. If there are women in the committee whether in the central or in regional organization, it happened by coincidence.

As consequence, specific and practical gender issues, such as mother's room in the workplace or on-site childcare were not part's of AJI's campaign. This is also partly because such issues usually are in the hand of house union in media companies as AJI is actually not a house union but a federation.

However, AJI is helping house unions to have collective agreement between house union and media owners. In collective agreement, media workers and media owners can negotiate company's rules. As of now, any workers, including media workers do not have bargaining power in deciding company's regulation as media owner made it.

With collective agreement, it is hoped that the house unions can include gender issues.

However, setting up a collective agreement is not easy. It takes longer time because each point of regulations should be discussed and agreed between two parties—the house union and the media owner.

Based on AJI Jakarta Chapter, off 20 media house union in Jakarta, only one house union manages to have collective agreement with the media owner.

About biases in workplace, they are largely depending on the media. In some media, gender biases in allocating work, beats/rounds or promotion did not exist. Some were vague.

However, so far, there has been no thorough research that can capture gender biases in media industry. Nonetheless, there are more and more women working in media industry. And many medias do not hesitate to place women in beats there are always perceived as male dominated sphere such as military or politics.

## WOMEN JOURNALISTS IN NEPAL

Presented by:

NIRMALA ACHARYA

**Central Member National Union of Journalists ( NUJ)**

Senior reporter, National News Agency (RSS), Nepal

### BACKGROUND

"Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; the right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers".

The quotation from the Article 19 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Right is relevant even today because it emphasizes the free flow ideas, the bedrock of press freedom. The constitution of the kingdom of Nepal, 1990, has guaranteed fundamental human rights including freedom of thought and expression. It also specifies that the Government may not censor any kinds of news and views item including other reading materials .The constitution has guaranteed the right of the press and publication. It has established the right of access to information for every Nepali citizen. The restoration of multi-party democracy in 1990 has ushered in a new era of liberalism, freedom and pluralism in society. The abrogation of restrictive clauses previously imposed on the press has opened the door for increased investment .Private sector investment has come heavily into the print as well as audio visual media.

### HISTORY OF WOMEN JOURNALIST IN NEPAL

History of involving women journalist in print media is not so long. Before establishment of democracy in 1950 AD a group of women journalists published monthly magazine "women ". The first women editor in chief in Nepalese history is Mrs. Shadana Adhikary. Now that paper is not in existence. Despite the history of more then hundred years of journalism, proportional representation of women in journalism is not satisfactory for this we most understand the socio-economic demography of Nepal .Nepal has not attained the 100 percent literacy either in chills or in adult education. We have to wait for this till 2015.The proportion girl child in primary and secondary level are50& 41 percent respectively. The society where the educational status of women are not at the same per as men, certainly women are always lagging behind the men in every front same thing happened in the field of journalism. There are other obstacles for women to involve as in journalism. Most of the parents of our society do not consider journalism as secure job for their girl child. There are very few women engaged in reporting, most of women journalists either want to be news anchor in TV, radio or want to be desk editor, and very few are struggling to stand as reporter in print as well as audio& visual medium. Those women who are involved in the field of journalism are mostly from the capital, Kathmandu, and few others urban areas. Out of 75 districts in the country, women journalists are present only in 24 districts. Recently department of press has reviewed the scenario. Out of 2729 journalists there are only 227 women journalists. Department of Information (HMG) the caste wise composition of journalists working in the field of print and electronic media out of 227.

Women journalists are as follows:

Brahmin:	93 = 40.96%
Chhetri:	47 = 20.70%
Newar:	44 = 19.38%
Lama:	2 = 2.88%

Mongoloid Group: 25 = 11.01%  
(Rai, Limbu & Gurung)

We see there is a vast difference in the caste composition of women journalists in the country. More than 80% of women journalists work in the different media in Kathmandu, which shows the centralization of women journalists in the capital. Although many media-training centers have cropped up in the last few years they have been unable to include women journalists from remote districts of Nepal.

#### THE NUMBER OF WOMEN JOURNALIST IN VARIOUS FIELDS.

GORKHAPATRA DAILY	2
THE RAISING NEPAL	1
NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY	2
RADIO NEPAL	15 (including media )
NEPAL TELEVISION	<u>15</u>
(These are all Govt. owned media)	37
KANTIPUR DAILY (NEPALY)	3
KATHMANDU POST (ENGLISH)	8
HIMALAYA TIMES ( NEPALY)	3
HIMALAYAN TIMES (ENGLISH)	9
SPACE TIME DAILY (NEPALY)	4
SPACE TO DAY (ENGLISH)	1
CHANNEL NEPAL	5 (including media)
NEPAL SHAMACHAR PATRA	1
RAJDHANI (DAILY)	3

There are more women journalists in FM radio, local TV channels (STN, Shangri-La), Advertising field, weekly paper too.

There are 5 magazines published by women targeting women. They are Manshi, Apechha, Asmita, Yosha and Bidushi. But they are not regular. 2 women's working in the field of journalism has attempted to organize themselves. They make Sancharika Samuha and Women journalists association of Nepal (WOJAN). This is a great obstacle for the union like us. But they are not effective. So we have more scope to incorporate their members to ours.

#### SITUATION OF PRESS

Nepal presents a queer model of coexistence of the officially controlled and private sector media. Government initiative has been prominent in the institutional development of modern mass media institutions since the publication of the first newspaper, Gorkhapatra, in 1901 A.D. The initiative later led to the establishment of a national broadcasting service, Radio Nepal (1970), the National News Agency (Rastriya samachar samiti) (1962), the press council (1970), Nepal Telecommunications corporation (1971) and Nepal Television (1982). The development of a free press was made possible only after the advent of restoration democracy in 1991. Many private newspapers, FM radio and two private TV channels came into operation thereafter. In terms of media reach, newspapers come into the third category. Although total readership was hardly one million in Nepal. They are much more stronger effective. There are nearly 1286 newspapers registered in District Administration office in all over the country.

## PROBLEMS OF WOMEN JOURNALISTS IN NEPAL

There is always some kind of problems in any of work those persons who work, removing these problem and difficulties definitely get success. So we should not afraid of the problem rather we should tackle wisely with them. In my opinion, there are two kinds of problem in our working place. First is the natural and second behavioural.

The nature made problem of working women is almost same in worldwide. It is general problem too. We have to cope up such problem & the problem, which creates by the person and which produces by the behaviour of society, is behavioural. Mainly the causes of this problem are lack of education, poverty and awareness. To over come such problem, we have to go long way. Because women primarily employer do not consider they prefer women because they may face multiple problems .They can not assign them out of their station, even in odd hours, They always fare to provide them maternity like long type of leave. so they most of the private news organization do not want permanently hire them instead they took them in contract. Most journalists could not get support from their family members. The working time is not acceptable by their family. Being women journalist they faces many problem .But the situation not so disappointing, Young graduates irrespective of gender are being attracted by media's glorious tame.

### LASTLY

It is a matter of great pleasure that there is no discrimination on the salary or wage in Nepal. Our constitution has guaranteed not to discriminate with respect of gender any cast, religion, language and any thing else.

The constitutions of our union also do not discriminate in the ground of gender. Both Male & female member are eligible to be come into leadership. As an emerging union we have not made any special committee to deal with female member but we are willing to do. So for as the mother's room and child care units are concerned, these are new experiences for us as our union female communities are small in every work unit. We expect sharing the ideas and learning the lessons from other union members & participant's comred.

Thank you

**Ruwanthi Kariyawasam**  
**Executive Committee Member**  
**Sri Lanka Working Journalists Association, Colombo**

There are no special womens committees in the Sri Lanka Working Journalists Association. But I feel women do not get any unfair because of this. Therefore since the beginning of our Association women also have been getting membership in our Association as similar to the male party that they obtain. As well as women also have the opportunity to be elected to the Executive Committee by competing at the Election.

Regarding to your question about the women positions, we have not such a special quota system that you have mentioned. But there is full freedom for the women contesting and electing to the Executive Committee or any higher post of the Association if they wish.

There is not any differences in the salaries in media field according to the gender. As to that we do not want to bother it.

Up to now the women have been served as activists in Executive Committee of our Association. Some occasions there were more than 5 or 6 women activists who had been served in our Association. I would like to mention here once a lady got an opportunity to hold a Chief post as a Chief Treasurer by contesting.

At present we have two female activists who were elected to the Executive Working committee.

It is a great regret the low participation in the Executive Committee though all the two females who contested at the last election had been selected.

In future we expect to encourage the women for the most participation for the Executive Committee and the other higher position in our committee.

There is not any special information set up for women in our Association. Even we don't have for our Association enough facilitation of modern technology. Due to these circumstances we are trouble in our activities. We try our best to fulfil it.

We are glad to say as we are in an Asian country female journalists are not forced or engaged in late night activities. Therefore I think no use of taking any action against for it regarding to the law female get the facilities to obtain. Parental leave that they needed.

In Sri Lanka when the female journalists are in the field they have to face troubles as same as the male journalists. But especially female journalists have to face some kind of hindrance regarding the social thought too. It has been affecting to the women in their free activities. As to the womens own traditional views and ideas also a disturbance for their future progress.

In spite of these obstacles women in the media field could achieve victories. Time to time the Editors Guild Awards ceremony which was held last month about 5 female journalists were awarded.

## **Rosanne Therese, Federation of Media Employees' Trade Unions (FMETU)**

Empowering women for a change program and raising their status in the media industry and their Trade Unions is very welcome by the women in the media industry in Sri Lanka as we have had very little exposure and possibilities to achieve gender equality.

As you may know women in Sri Lanka most often are given second place at their work places, in society and even in the home. Hence, the concept of her active participation and status in trade union activities is also very limited due to numerous constraints.

The Trade Unions in Sri Lanka have on one hand paid very little emphasis on women's issues and raising the status of women in Sri Lanka. In my union there has been no establishment of a women's committee. In Sri Lanka this is mainly due to the reluctance of women members participation in Trade Union activities due to many constraints within the framework of media institutions, which very often deal with Trade Union activists harshly, sometimes with discriminations whether it be in the state owned media or private. Thus the fear of losing one's job takes priority, since in Sri Lanka a woman's financial contribution to keep the home fires burning is a necessity.

Although the number of women entering the media industry in Sri Lanka has steadily increased in the recent past there has been no women's committee established in the trade union. However, we hope to encourage Sri Lankan Media Women into broader participation in Trade Union activities in the near future by making use of the resources which will be made available to us following the workshop.

Secondly, Sri Lanka women in general are considered to be very duty conscious when it comes to their families and the home front. Thus having to attend to the chores at home, dependent children and elderly parents they have very little time to spend on Trade Union matters as a career in the media industry itself is very time consuming. Thus even though the motives in the long run could and would improve their status they are very often compelled to take a back seat in these matters. And not having a women's committee in the Trade Union makes matters even more difficult for women in the media industry to directly deal with day-to-day issues which affect their lifestyles so much after all. In the media industry for example there is no equality & professional status in most institutions in Sri Lanka. Most often there are big disparities in wages between the two sexes which never seems to be bridged, although the same duties are successfully discharged by the women media personnel, notwithstanding the sense of reliability and responsibility they discharge which is very often more acceptable than that of men. Thus suggestions, concrete and convincing ideas for change of women's roles in trade union activities and as activities has been very well welcomed the women in the media industry in Sri Lanka today.

Then, regarding the quota system guaranteeing women positions on executive committees is also not available to us nor is there any information sources set up by the union, particularly targeting women.

With regard to parental leave and flexible working hours too I am afraid to say that there have been no specific achievements by our unions on this issue as well. The practice has been the standard 84 days maternity leave and permission being granted by the Head of Department to leave early, which is totally discretionary.

As for the strategies on portrayal of women in the media, we could state that it is quite satisfactory. Much exposure has and is being given to women's achievements in Sri Lanka we could say. There is no restriction as such on this issue we have noted.

And finally with regard to the issue of outstanding achievements of women in the media industry in Sri Lanka, we really do not have any 'outstanding' achievements as such to specifically mention. We are still young and growing where the media industry is concerned.

## **CURRENT CONDITIONS FOR FEMALE JOURNALISTS IN TAIWAN**

**Jean Shih, President, Association of Taiwan Journalists**

### **Preface**

Female journalists play a pivotal role in Taiwan's media industry. They stand out in all major areas, including political, social, economical and so on. However, they still encounter many difficulties in their working environment. Some of the current conditions and problems for the female journalists in Taiwan are as follows:

### **The difficulty for a female journalist to advance into a higher position**

In the last few years there has been an explosion in Taiwan's media. The increase of newspapers, electronic media and television news had opened up many more opportunities for women to work in the media. Under similar conditions, because of the competency in work performance shown by the female journalists, there has been an increase in the number of women in journalism. Taiwan's female journalists now equal and perhaps surpass their male counterparts in both quality and quantity. However, the increase of capable women in journalism does not imply an increase of the number of women in top positions in the industry. The fact is there are very few women holding high-ranking positions such as editor in chief or of directorial level.

With equal educational backgrounds and abilities, male journalists are often considered ahead of female journalists in times of promotion. The contributing factor may be women's traditional role in society. Aside from her career, a woman often carries out the duty of a mother and a wife. To a corporation, the role of woman as a caregiver is often viewed as troublesome and could possibly interfere with her ability to perform at work. She may become pregnant or may need to take care of her children. To the superiors, these nonessential concerns take precedence over the abilities of female journalists.

Secondly, the woman's role as a caregiver may prevent her from joining get-togethers after work. Although this does not directly interfere with her performance at work, but her absence from the social gatherings inhibits her from mingling thus missing the opportunity of establishing important relationships with her colleagues, superiors, and the people she may need to interview. In addition, the nature of the get-togethers often revolve around heavy drinking at nightclubs in which hostesses provide sexual services or other activities of a sexual nature and are unfit for a woman to join. Some feel that the only way for a woman to be taken seriously is to not take herself as a woman.

The inability of women in journalism to gain professional recognition in the form of promotion is the consequences of a deeply rooted tradition of a society centered on men. This cultural aspect does not directly relate the media industry, but does have an obvious impact on it.

### **Female journalists are stereotyped**

Despite of the accomplishments of a female journalist, her professional qualifications are often ignored due to stereotypes. For example, when a female journalist becomes successful, people begin to assume that a special relationship exists between her and her superior, or her and the interviewee, especially when the journalist is covering social or political subject matters. Since most of the time these superiors and the

interviewees are men, society rather believe that female journalists carry out sexual favors in order to obtain exclusive news than to believe in their professionalism.

Another way female journalists are stereotyped is the belief that women are only good for embellishment. The fact is, some media put more weight on the female journalist's appearance than her qualifications, especially on the television news. These women who often appear on the television because they are pretty but not because of the quality of the material they cover. More like movie stars, their private lives become the subject of review on entertainment columns. This type of attention sometimes misleads these female journalists to confuse the responsibilities. Their job is to do the interview, but is not to be the subject of the interview.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Female journalists frequently experience verbal or physical harassment in their working environment. Sexual harassment may come from their own boss or colleagues, or even from people they interview. However, if the female journalist raises formal complaint against the transgressor, she may be viewed as overreacting or the fault may even be placed upon her. And to be sure, there will be more bumps along the way in her career as a newswoman.