

**MS THESIS**

**CHALLENGES FOR JOURNALISTS IN  
BALOCHISTAN: A JOURNALISTS' PERSPECTIVE**



**Researcher**

**Abid Ali**

Reg. 532-FSS/MSMC/F22

**Supervisor**

**Dr. Muhammad Junaid Ghauri**

**DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY, ISLAMABAD**

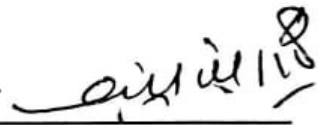
### Approval Sheet

It is certified that we have read this thesis entitled "Challenges for Journalists in Balochistan: A Journalists' Perspective", submitted by **ABID ALI**. We judge that this thesis is of sufficient standard to warrant its acceptance by the International Islamic University Islamabad for the award of an MS Degree in Media and Communication Studies.

### Committee

#### Supervisor

Dr. MUHAMMAD JUNAID GHOURI:

Signature 

Dr. Shabir Hussain  
External Examiner:

Signature 

Dr. Adnan Manawar  
Internal Examiner:

Signature 

Chairman DMCS:

Signature 

Dean FSS:

Signature 

### **Declaration**

I hereby certify that this work, which I now submit for assessment for the program of study leading to the award of MS entitled: “Challenges for Journalists in Balochistan: A Journalists’ Perspective” is entirely my work, that I have exercised reasonable care to ensure that the work is original, and does not to the best of my knowledge breach any law of copyright, and has been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

**Abid Ali**

532-FSS/MSMC/F22

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

I would like to express my sincere thanks to my supervisor Dr. Muhammad Junaid Ghauri, Ph.D., who consistently embraced me with knowledge and kindness.

Furthermore, I extend my thanks to Dolat DK for providing me with accommodation in Kech and to Iqbal Ghulam in Gwadar during my data collection/survey period.

I also send my gratitude to the Baloch Students for their consistent support throughout this endeavor.

Moreover, I deeply admire my father, Sanghur Ali, for his dedicated hard work in support of my studies.

## DEDICATION

To the Baloch students who are moving the wheel!

"راج ءوانده گمیں تو اوست ءارمانے منی"

---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

<b>LIST OF TABLES .....</b>	<b>VI</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES.....</b>	<b>VIII</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATION(S).....</b>	<b>IX</b>
<b>ABSTRACT.....</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1. Journalism: A Hard Topic in Balochistan .....	2
1.2. Problem Statement .....	7
1.3. Significance of the Study.....	7
1.4. Objectives of the Study .....	9
1.3.1 Research Objectives Are Explained .....	9
1.4 Research Questions .....	10
1.4.1 Research Questions Are Explained .....	10
<b>CHAPTER 2.....</b>	<b>12</b>
2. LITERATURE REVIEW .....	12
2.1 Review of the Related Literature .....	12
2.2 Theoretical Framework.....	21
2.2.1 Hierarchy of Influences .....	21
<b>CHAPTER 3.....</b>	<b>26</b>
3. METHODOLOGY .....	26
3.1 Research Design .....	26
3.2 Population .....	26
3.3. Sampling.....	27
3.3.1 Sampling size.....	28
3.4. Unit of Analysis.....	28
3.5. Major Variables of the Study .....	28
3.5.1. Independent Variable.....	29
3.5.2. Dependent Variable .....	29
3.6. Research Instrument.....	29
3.7. Procedure (Data Collection).....	30
3.8. Data Analysis .....	30
<b>CHAPTER 5.....</b>	<b>55</b>
5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION .....	55
5.1. Discussion.....	55
5.1.1. Baloch Journalists Amidst Challenges .....	55
5.1.2. Everything Failed to Protect the Journalists: But They Are Optimistic .....	57
5.2. Conclusion.....	59
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1.....</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2.....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>APPENDIX 3.....</b>	<b>74</b>

---

## LIST OF TABLES

---

Table 1: Sample description.....	29
Table 2: Gender.....	32
Table 3: Age of the participants.....	32
Table 4: Qualification.....	33
Table 5: Form of Organization.....	33
Table 6: Job description.....	33
Table 7: Experience.....	34
Table 8: To what extent do you cover political issues.....	34
Table 9: To what extent do you feel insecure while covering political issues.....	35
Table 10: To what extent do you believe journalists in Balochistan face security.....	35
Table 11: To what extent do security challenges affect your journalism.....	36
Table 12: To what extent have you faced direct threats or violence due to your work.....	36
Table 13: To what extent did you ever get physical injuries covering political issues.....	37
Table 14: To what extent did you ever need to go into isolation after receiving threats.....	37
Table 15: To what extent do you feel adequately trained to handle threats or risky.....	38
Table 16: To what extent do you personally adopt safety measures while reporting.....	38
Table 17: To what extent do you feel your family is at risk because of your profession.....	39
Table 18: To what extent do you face challenges while gathering information.....	39
Table 19: To what extent do you believe the lack of security measures impacts your.....	40
Table 20: To what extent have you ever had to self-censor your reporting to ensure your.....	40
Table 21: To what extent do you believe self-censorship impacts the ‘quality’ of .....	41
Table 22: To what extent do you believe self-censorship impacts the ‘accuracy’ of .....	41
Table 23: To what extent do you ever receive threats or intimidation from state.....	42
Table 24: To what extent do you ever receive threats or intimidation from militant .....	42
Table 25: To what extent do you ever receive threats or intimidation from.....	43
Table 26: To what extent do you ever receive threats or intimidation from.....	43
Table 27: To what extent have you ever been censored by your employer.....	44
Table 28: To what extent have you ever been censored by your government.....	44
Table 29: To what extent do you believe that there is a lack of political will to.....	45
Table 30: To what extent do you receive any formal training on conflict.....	45
Table 31: To what extent do you feel the press associations in Balochistan.....	46

Table 32: To what extent are you aware of any safety workshops or training aimed.....	47
Table 33: To what extent does your organization handle emergencies: like threats or.....	47
Table 34: To what extent do you trust local law enforcement agencies to protect.....	48
Table 35: To what extent do you trust the local law government to protect journalists.....	49
Table 36: To what extent do you believe civil society can protect journalists from.....	49
Table 37: To what extent do security concerns influence the way you choose stories .....	50
Table 38: To what extent do you avoid reporting on specific issues to avoid backlash.....	50
Table 39: To what extent does your fear of surveillance or monitoring affect your.....	51
Table 40: To what extent do you think journalists in rural areas face more significant.....	51
Table 41: To what extent do you believe journalists can influence positive change.....	52
Table 42: To what extent do you believe solidarity among journalists plays in.....	52
Table 43: To what extent do you face challenges from state authorities while.....	53
Table 44: To what extent do you face pressure from political parties regarding.....	53
Table 45: To what extent do you face pressure from tribal groups regarding.....	54
Table 46: To what extent do you believe your employer/institution provides.....	54
Table 47: To what extent do you believe the government provides adequate.....	55



---

---

## LIST OF FIGURES

---

---

Figure 1: Hierarchy of Influences (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996/2014).....	26
---	----

---

---

---

## LIST OF ABBREVIATION(s)

---

BYC:	Baloch Yekjehti Committee
PEMRA:	Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority
IFJ:	International Federation of Journalists
BUJ:	Balochistan Unions of Journalists
QPC:	Quetta Press Club
RWB:	Reporters Without Borders
WPGJ:	White Papers on Global Journalism
IRADA:	Institute of Research Advocacy and Development
F.C.:	Frontier Corp
LEA(s):	Law Enforcement Agencies
DSNG:	Digital Satellite News Gathering
PTSD:	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
NGO(s):	Non-Governmental Organization
BBJ:	Balochistan Body of Journalists

## ABSTRACT

This study investigates the challenges that ‘working’ journalists faces in Gwadar and Kech districts in the Makran region of Balochistan, and focuses on security and structural/institutional challenges by the Makran based journalists by employing the Hierarchy of Influences model, an organized theoretical framework introduced by Pamela Shoemaker & Stephen D. Reese (1996, 2014). This research aims to shed light on journalistic practices, analyze the impact of the challenging environment/factors, and propose solutions, questioning authorities and institutions to ensure journalist safety and press freedom in a conflict zone like the Makran region. This first-hand account can raise awareness about journalists’ struggles in the region, advocate for better media conditions, and highlight journalism’s critical role in promoting informed mediums for the humans who are surviving in wars. There are 44 registered working journalists in the two selected regions (Gwadar and Kech) of Balochistan. The sample size for this research comprises twenty (20) working journalists from the combined population of these two regions. The researcher compiled an alphabetical list of all 44 members of the selected population and assigned them sequential numbers. Utilizing the formula for the sampling interval ( $k = N/n$ ), where (N) represents the total number of units in the selected population (44) and (n) represents the chosen sample size (20), the interval was calculated as  $44 / 20 = 2.2$ . Purposive sampling utilizes to choose key informants like as experienced and informative journalists to ensure a thorough examination of viewpoints on the challenges of journalism/journalists in Gwadar and Kech districts of Balochistan. The findings offers insights into the specific security concerns, professional obstacles, and overall working conditions faced by journalists in this region, contributing to a more nuanced or complex understanding of the media landscape in Gwadar and Kech, (e.g., the findings show that the security of journalists is a reason for ‘*bad*’ journalism in Gwadar and Kech. And, there are no proper training methods by the government, employers, or institutions to ensure the safety of journalists, which is an institutional/structural challenges. This research intends to highlight the realities of reporting in a potentially volatile region and underscore the importance of ensuring the safety and security of media workers/journalists in Gwadar and Kech.

**Keywords:** Journalism, Journalists, Challenges, Balochistan, Security, Structural/Institutional, Gwadar, Kech

# CHAPTER 1

## 1. INTRODUCTION

“They told me to quit journalism... or prepare your Kapan (shroud).”

– *Journalist (A) from Gwadar Press Club*

“Our (institution’s) camera must be protected; we are not responsible for you.”

– *Journalist (B) from Turbat Press Club*

These two statements together portray the challenging situation faced by journalists in the Gwadar and Kech districts. The first statement, said by a journalist member of the Gwadar Press Club, recounts receiving a call from an unspecified camp. In the call, the individual from the camp expressed an intention to visit and demanded an explanation regarding information, journalist ‘A’ had circulated on social media concerning a protest organized by a Baloch Yekjehti Committee (BYC) or face death (prepare the shroud).

The second statement, recounted by a member of the Turbat Press Club in Turbat, Kech, highlights a concerning attitude prevalent among journalists’ employers and institutions. The journalist stated that these entities prioritize the security of the institution’s equipment over the safety and well-being of the journalists themselves.

Balochistan is characterized by a unique and often turbulent socio-political landscape marked by a complex interplay of politics and violence: long-standing movements, persistent security concerns. This complicated environment significantly shapes the active space for all sectors, including the media. In that context, the work of journalists becomes not only essential for informing the masses but also inherently more challenging and often dangerous (one can face violence).

This thesis undertakes a mix method survey analysis into the specific challenges (security and structural/institutional) faced by journalists working within the separate and often un-

der-reported areas: Gwadar and Kech districts in the Makran region of Balochistan. By focusing closely on the first-hand accounts/ [through questionnaire] and perspectives of journalists, those who witness and report on the ground. This study aims to shed light on the web of inter-linked problem(s) that profoundly impact their journalism to report freely, safely, and broadly.

### **1.1. Journalism: A Hard Topic in Balochistan**

Journalism is a responsible, hard, and risky profession/field. Journalists contribute to society despite all obstacles, hurdles, and challenges placed in their work. The link between journalists and their content [it can be visual, printed, or text-based communication] is critical in building public perception and their ideas. Journalism, in any society, is an objective [but not only] message imparter that must be free of any restrictions, effects, and control. According to Shirazi (2017), “when talking about the media is the fourth pillar of the state because that means it balances state powers and has an impact on the public sphere” (Shirazi, 2017). But, it has a different approach in different regions based on their political and social happenings.

In conflict zones, journalists have to face a lot of challenges. In effect of that, journalistic activities become biased/nonreliable/unauthentic. Even in extraordinarily volatile and dangerous situations, their [journalists] primary duties are to serve and enlighten their audiences/masses towards any happening in society. However, the safety of journalists/media workers reporting/coverage from war zones is a hard topic because they face several challenges regularly. In that sense of restricted and hegemonic journalism, Balochistan is one of the regions as a dangerous field (Baloch & Andresen, 2020).

Additionally, since the 2000s, media activities have increased in Balochistan. Such in Quetta, the capital of Balochistan has become the center of media/journalistic activities. Media institutions like Geo News, *The News*, Samaa TV, Express TV, *The Nation*, Ary Channel, *Dawn*, *Daily Times*, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, etc., opened up their offices in Quetta. Furthermore, Na-

tional and International news networks provided via cable TV distributors, e.g. in 2010, Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA), listed shows and television channels, accessed by 68 companies in Baloch regions, such as Khuzdar, Mastung, Lasbela, Jafarbad, Naseerabad, Sibbi, Kharan, and Bolan (see Shirazi, 2017).

Additionally, a report published by the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) (2013), that argues, 80 dailies and weeklies were published in Balochistan, in Balochi, three in the Pashto, and one in Brahui language. Moreover, all national and International/al radios have bureau(s) in Quetta and other cities.

According to Balochistan Union of Journalists (BUOJ) sources, more than 500 journalists are working in Balochistan. Among them are part-time journalists (freelance journalists), and a maximum of 140 of them are full-time journalists. More than 95 are members of the Balochistan Union of Journalists and Quetta Press Club (QPC). Furthermore, above 425 journalists are registered voters with the Balochistan Press Club (Shirazi, 2017; BUOJ, n.d.). They desire to do their journalism with the independence afforded to journalists internationally.

However, these journalists are facing major challenges to work freely. In this context, this study explores the multifaceted (security and structural/institutional) challenges that make Balochistan one of the most dangerous regions for journalists in the world. ‘Violence’: such as threats, abduction, and assassination are all possible against working journalists in the region. According to Reporters Without Borders (RWB) (2019) that, Pakistan ranked 142 out of 180 countries in terms of press freedom, identifying it as one of the most challenging and perilous environments/atmospheres for journalists globally (RWB, 2019). Similarly, Akhtar and Pratt (2017) noted that journalism in Pakistan faces significant challenges, including issues of professionalism, ethical lapses, and physical violence: [threats, abduction, and assassination (Akhtar and Pratt, 2017)].

Further, according to Jamil (2019), media professionals in Pakistan\* face substantial security risks not only in rural and tribal regions but also in urban centers and major cities (Jamil, 2019).

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and White Paper on Global Journalism (WPOGJ) (2020) listed Pakistan among the top ‘5’ most dangerous countries for journalists (IFOJ and WPGJ, 2020). This aligns with the 2017 assessment by Reporters Without Borders, which also rated Pakistan as one of the most ‘riskiest’ locations for journalistic practices (IFOJ, 2020; RWB, 2017).

With that, media workers/journalists in Balochistan, according to an Amnesty International report (2014), experience violence, such as constant pressure, threats, and from various actors, including separatists, sectarian extremists, political parties, tribal elites, and state organizations or security forces. These groups often coerce journalists into reporting following their specific agendas/narratives, thereby limiting press freedom and independent reporting (Amnesty International, 2014).

For the past two decades, Pakistan\* has been identified as one of the most dangerous countries for media due to the increase in conflicts and violence, that increased the threats against journalists and media organizations. However, in the decades, Balochistan, in particular, has been a highly volatile\* region characterized by conflict and political violence. These factors have created an unsafe environment for journalists, resulting in numerous casualties (Tahir & Niaz, 2016).

Similarly, militant or separatist organizations operating in Balochistan often perceive media workers as state agents, leading to targeted killings of journalists. Conversely, journalists who report on issues raised by these groups risk being labeled as sympathizers or agents of these organizations by the state and law enforcement agencies. This precarious situation creates an extremely dangerous environment for media professionals in the region (Amnesty International, 2014).

Correspondingly, a 2014 report by the Institute of Research, Advocacy, and Development (IRADA) indicated that over the past two decades, more than 20 media professionals

have been killed in Balochistan. The journalist community holds both state and non-state actors accountable for these actions. Both military and insurgent organizations often manipulate information to suit their agendas, and journalists who report on their activities are frequently labeled as agents by both sides (Hussain & Rehman, 2015; IRADA, 2014).

Accordingly, (again) Tahir & Niaz (2016) found that media professionals in Balochistan have been murdered and threatened both for reporting on and for avoiding coverage of the conflict in the region.

Historically, journalists in rural areas have been subjected to threats from tribal and political leaders, security agencies, local authorities, and extremist groups. Similarly, (again) IRADA (2014) indicates that the security situation for media professionals is considerably more precarious in the remote and rural districts of Balochistan compared to the provincial capital and other urban centers. Moreover, journalists in Balochistan, including those based in Quetta, often lack access to dedicated emergency hotlines and specialized safety services, even within organizations such as the Balochistan Union of Journalists (BUJ) and the Quetta Press Club.

According to Masood (2017), journalists operating in conflict zones frequently employ strategies to avoid provoking conflict groups by meticulously crafting their reports. This practice, however, can compromise the principles of objective journalism and limit the critical analysis necessary for society to understand real-world issues (Masood, 2017). In a similar context, Jamil (2019) posits that media workers face severe repercussions due to persistent threats from both terrorist organizations and security forces aimed at manipulating their reporting (Jamil, 2019).

(Further), Agha (2011) argues that media workers in Pakistan\* encounter significant safety risks in their professional duties, thereby impeding the overall effective functioning of the media industry (Agha, 2011).



Media organizations based in the region (Balochistan) encounter challenges. Reporting on human rights violations and pro-longed movements is severely restricted in Balochistan (Agha & Demeter, 2022). Accordingly, journalists in Balochistan are often perceived as affiliated with either anti-federation, pro-federation, or nationalist sentiments, making biased reporting a significant threat to their safety (see IFJ, 2013). In this context of conflict, media professionals frequently find themselves in unsafe situations, risking their lives to report on critical events.

These conditions can significantly impact their mental well-being, potentially leading to various psychological disorders. They are compelled to cover conflict activities, exposing themselves to life-threatening risks. Consequently, they face violence from various organizations and state authorities for not adhering to demands for biased coverage. Tragically, some journalists have lost their lives or experienced the loss of a loved one while fulfilling their duty to inform the public (Hussain & Rehman, 2015).

To mitigate the risks faced by media professionals: Journalists' Unions have established editorial boards to collaboratively draft sensitive news stories, particularly those concerning conflict. However, the effectiveness of this measure is often hampered by the different editorial policies prevalent across various media organizations. As IRADA (2014) has noted, a significant number of media organizations lack formalized safety guidelines (see data analysis chapter) that outline necessary precautions for covering sensitive content, including attacks, violence, and militant activities. Moreover, these organizations frequently fail to provide essential medical or legal assistance to journalists who have been subjected to threats or attacks.

Additionally, media workers have been targeted by [all] sides, as they are often seen as vulnerable and easily targeted (IRADA, 2014; UNESCO, 2014).

This research focuses on two main research questions: 1: What are the main challenges faced by the journalists working in Gwadar and Kech districts? What are the structural and

institutional challenges faced by the journalists working in the Gwadar and Kech districts, which contribute to an understanding of the specific vulnerabilities and resilience of journalists working in conflict-affected and politically sensitive regions like Gwadar and Kech districts?

## **1.2. Problem Statement**

The security situation in Balochistan presents a threat to journalists/media workers attempting to report on the region's complex issues. This study tries to dig into the multiple security and structural/institutional challenges that Balochistan's journalists face, including; threats, censorship, self-censorship, proper lack of training, professionalism etc. This research intends to provide a complete understanding of the current condition of journalism and to propose possible solutions to promote a more resilient media environment in Balochistan (particularly in Gwadar and Kech) by examining the interplay of security and structural and institutional challenges.

This research has been grounded in a journalist's perspective and explores the major challenges, specifically the security and structural challenges they face every day. From violence and threats-to-life: journalists navigate a daily environment that limits their ability to report issues, such as human rights in Balochistan.

## **1.3. Significance of the Study**

Independent media plays an enormous role in fostering an informed and engaged citizen/person/audience. By shedding light on the 'challenges' faced by those [journalists], tasked with informing the public/audience, this research highlights the importance of creating an enabling environment for journalism in Balochistan. Ultimately, this contributes to a society where citizens have access to diverse and reliable information on human rights, socio-political issues, etc., empowering them to participate more effectively in democratic processes and hold dominant sources accountable.

More than that, the field of journalism in Balochistan remains an often overlooked area of academic inquiry, this study directly addresses this gap by providing an in-depth counting of the current state, and challenges (security and institutional) of the media landscape in Gwadar and Kech areas of Makran in Balochistan.

(Again) this idea is crucial for academics, policymakers, media practitioners, and civil society organizations seeking to engage with and support journalism in the region. By systematically documenting the challenges faced by journalists, this research aims to empower media professionals on the ground [in a conflict zone particularly].

Additionally, the findings serve as a basis for collective advocacy, highlighting shared struggles and informing strategies for improved safety, working conditions, and professional development. This adopted a stronger sense of community and facilitated the development of support networks among journalists. Further, the study's insights into the structural and institutional challenges hindering effective journalism can contribute to a more complex and accurate portrayal of Balochistan and the issues in both local and national media. By understanding the constraints under which journalists operate, stakeholder(s) can work towards promoting an environment that allows for comprehensive, representative, and non-framed reporting, moving beyond potentially biased and 'constructive' narratives created by the media.

Furthermore, the research findings offer valuable data for policymakers, governmental bodies, and international organizations working on media development and journalism challenges. By identifying specific security and structural challenges, this study informs the design and implementation of targeted intervention(s) aimed at strengthening the media landscape of Gwadar and Kech districts in the Makran region. This includes advocating for 'legal' reforms, promoting media literacy, investing in journalist training and safety mechanisms by media organizations and government, and fostering greater access to information in a war zone, such as Makran in Balochistan.

This study is particularly significant in its aim to understand and address the journalistic needs and perspectives within the Gwadar and Kech districts. By focusing on challenges and structural realities of journalism/journalists in the area, the research seeks to contribute to a media landscape that is relevant, responsive, and truly serves the information requirements of the Baloch people, amplifying their voices and concerns on grave issues (e.g. human rights). Lastly, this research holds an important potential to contribute to a deeper understanding of journalism in Balochistan, empower its practitioners, improve the media landscape, inform crucial policy decisions, and ultimately foster more informed and engaged human beings, thereby serving the journalistic needs of the Baloch people and their society.

#### **1.4. Objectives of the Study**

**Objective No. 1:** To find out the challenges (particularly security) faced by the journalists ‘working’ in the Gwadar and Kech districts of Balochistan.

**Objective No. 2:** To figure out the structural and institutional challenges faced by the journalists in Balochistan.

##### **1.3.1 Research Objectives Are Explained**

In the first objective of the study: the researcher wants to focus on the direct and immediate ‘security’ challenges that journalists working in Gwadar and Kech districts encounter in their daily work and personal lives. It aims to identify the ‘tangible’/‘physical’ challenges that compromise their ability to report freely, safely, and effectively in war zones like Makran in Balochistan.

The second objective delves deeper into the underlying systems, organizations, and frameworks that contribute to the challenges faced by journalists in Gwadar and Kech. It looks beyond individual incidents to identify the structural and institutional issues that create and continue these challenges.

## **1.4 Research Questions**

RQ. 1: What are the main (security) challenges faced by the journalists working in Gwadar and Kech districts?

RQ. 2: What are the structural and institutional challenges faced by the journalists working in the Gwadar and Kech districts?

### **1.4.1 Research Questions Are Explained**

The first research question seeks to identify and articulate the most problematic challenges (security) encountered by journalists working in their daily professional lives within the specific areas of Gwadar and Kech districts of the Makran in Balochistan. It aims to move beyond general assumptions about the media landscape and instead focus on the unique journalism realities of these two particular districts (Gwadar and Kech) in Balochistan.

The emphasis on ‘main challenges’ suggests a need to prioritize and highlight the most impactful issues that directly impede journalists’ ability to gather, verify, and disseminate information independently. Answering this question involves exploring a range of potential difficulties, including threats to personal safety, restrictions on access to information, pressures from various actors (state and non-state), limitations on freedom of expression, and the practical constraints of working in an unstable and under-resourced environment. Eventually, this question aims to provide a foundational understanding of the immediate and pressing hardships faced by journalists on the ground in Gwadar and Kech.

Building upon the identification of challenges, the second research question delves deeper into the underlying systemic issues that contribute to and perpetuate those difficulties. The focus here shifts from the direct experiences of individual journalists to the broader frameworks, systems, and organizations that shape their working environment. Structural challenges refer to the larger societal, political, and economic factors that create obstacles for journalists.

This could include issues like weak governance, the dominant role of security forces, and the influence of political structures.

On the other hand, this RQ pertains to the failures within specific organizations and systems, such as the lack of ‘legal’ protections for journalists, the absence of healthy media support organizations, inadequate training, and resources provided by media outlets/institutions/press clubs.

By exploring these structural and institutional dimensions, this question aims to uncover the root causes of the challenges identified in the first research question, providing an understanding of the systemic issues that need to be addressed to improve the working conditions and safety of journalists in Gwadar and Kech.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter reviews the ‘challenges’ of journalism in Balochistan—a region identified by international rankings as the ‘riskiest’ environment for media/journalists (RWB, 2017, 2019; IFOJ, 2020; WPGJ, 2020). These highlight a convergence of challenges: ranging from structural, ethical, and a lack of professionalism to the alarming prevalence of physical violence against journalists (Akhtar & Pratt, 2017). Within this broader context of insecurity, [the region] of Balochistan emerges as a particularly acute crisis zone for journalism. Over the past two decades, as media activity has expanded in the region with the establishment of numerous national and international news outlets (Shirazi, 2017), journalists operating in the region have faced an exceptionally dangerous environment marked by kidnappings, harassment, and assassinations at the hands of religious extremists, separatist movements, and security forces (Amnesty International, 2014; Tahir & Niaz, 2016).

#### **2.1 Review of the Related Literature**

According to Reporters Without Borders (2019), Pakistan\* ranks ‘142’ out of ‘180’ countries for journalism crises. It recognized Pakistan as one of the hardest and most dangerous areas for journalists in the world (RWB, 2019). Akhtar and Pratt (2017), stated, Pakistan’s journalism is full of challenges, such as professionalism, ‘ethical’ violations, and physical attacks (Akhtar and Pratt, 2017). Similarly, according to the White Paper on Global Journalism (WPGJ), reported by the International Federation of Journalists in (2020), Pakistan was listed in the top ‘5’ most dangerous countries for the practice of journalism in the world (WPGJ, 2020; IFOJ, 2020). In 2017, Reporters Without Borders (RWB) also rated Pakistan among the most dangerous countries for journalistic practices (see RWB, 2017).

Since 2000 media activities have increased in Balochistan. Quetta, the capital of Balochistan has become the center of media/journalism activities. Media institutions like: Geo News, *The News*, Samaa TV, Express TV, *The Nation*, Ary Channel, *Dawn*, *Daily Times*, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, etc., opened up their offices in the capital (Quetta). Furthermore, National and International news networks provided via cable TV distributors, (e.g. in 2010, Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA), listed shows and television channels, accessed by ‘68’ companies, in Baloch areas, such as Khuzdar, Mastung, Lasbela, Jafarbad, Naseerabad, Sibbi, Kharan, and Bolan) (Shirazi, 2017.) They (journalists) in Balochistan have faced severe threats, including kidnapping, harassment, and assassination, perpetrated by religious extremists, separatist insurgents/movements, and security forces. These groups often coerce journalists to report in line with their specific agendas, limiting press freedom and independent reporting (Amnesty International, 2014).

For the past two decades, Pakistan has been identified as one of the most dangerous countries for media due to the surge in conflicts and violence against journalists and media organizations, however, Balochistan [in particular], is a highly risky region marked by war, and political tensions. These factors have created an unsafe environment for journalists, leading to many casualties (Tahir & Niaz, 2016).

In a similar vein, militant or separatist organizations operating in Balochistan often perceive media workers as state agents, resulting in targeted killings of journalists. Conversely, if journalists report on issues raised by these groups, they risk being labeled as ‘sympathizers’ or ‘agents’ of these organizations by the state. This double-edged sword creates an extremely dangerous environment for media and their journalists in the region. Matching this argument, according to a report by IRADA (Institute of Research, Advocacy, and Development) in 2014, over the past two decades, more than ‘20’ media professionals have been killed in Balochistan. The journalist community holds both state and non-state actors accountable for these actions.



Both intelligence agencies and insurgent organizations often manipulate information to suit their agendas, and journalists who report on their activities are frequently labeled as ‘agents’ by both sides (Amnesty International, 2014; Hussain & Rehman, 2015).

Tahir & Niaz, (2016) again found that media professionals in Balochistan have been assassinated and threatened for both reporting on and avoiding coverage of the war and human rights in the region (Tahir & Niaz, 2016). Additionally, Aslam (2015) states that the increasing frequency of violent attacks against ‘field’ working journalists in Pakistan has led to a growing sense of apathy and indifference among those working in newsroom environments (Aslam, 2015).

Furthermore, Hussain & Rehman (2015) again argued that: journalists in Balochistan are deeply afraid for their personal and family safety, citing security as a major issue (Hussain & Rehman, 2015). And, media workers and reporters often lack satisfactory support and protection, particularly when covering sensitive topics such as war, conflict and human rights topic. The lack of support from stakeholders and authorities (state/government) leaves journalists vulnerable to threats and attacks. Similarly, according to IRADA (2014), government authorities and relevant stakeholders have failed to establish adequate support mechanisms and policy guidelines to provide ‘financial’, ‘medical’, and ‘legal’ aid to media workers. They (media professionals) operating in war zones often lack adequate incentives and job security: which can exacerbate their ‘psychological’ and ‘financial’ burdens (Aslam, 2015; IRADA, 2014).

As a war zone–Balochistan has seen severe restrictions on media freedom, imposed by both militant organizations and security forces. This environment has created significant risks for media workers, deterring them from expressing critical opinions in editorials and columns. Those who do speak out, face threats, enforced disappearances, violence, or other forms of intimidation. This climate of fear has forced many media professionals to abandon their careers (Tahir & Niaz, 2016).

According to Amnesty International (2014), powerful political forces hinder the operations of media organizations in Balochistan by targeting and threatening their staff and reporters/journalists, as well as by forcing local cable companies to block their transmissions and coverage (Amnesty International, 2014).

More than that, reporting in Balochistan has generally been an essential duty of the regional media and journalists. Hence, media workers are found killed and several times threatened while reporting on the situation of the region. Both state and non-state actors are involved in creating challenges for journalists working in the region. Similarly, different actors such as Frontier Corps (F.C.), Intelligence Agencies (LEA(s)), and separatist organizations are involved in threatening, abducting, and killing journalists in Balochistan (Kundi and Hussain, 2008, 2020; Ricchiardi, 2012).

Furthermore, journalists and news editors in Balochistan reported that they were unable to report critically on security forces, militants, etc., due to a lack of adequate protection (Hussain, Rehman 2015). With that, media organizations often insure their technical resources like cameras and DSNG vehicles, but they frequently neglect to insure their most valuable asset, employees and journalists. Journalists who risk their lives to report from war zones deserve ‘greater’ protection and security measures (see Amnesty International, 2014).

According to Jamil (2019), media professionals in Pakistan face significant security risks not only in rural and tribal regions but also in urban areas and major cities. Historically, journalists in rural areas have been subjected to threats from tribal and political leaders (see Table 33), security agencies, local authorities, and extremist groups. In a similar vein, according to IRADA (2014), the security situation for media professionals is significantly more unsafe in the remote and rural areas of Balochistan compared to the capital of Quetta and other urban centers. Additionally, those based in Quetta, often lack access to dedicated emergency

hotlines and specialized safety services, even within organizations like the Balochistan Union of Journalists (BUJ) and the Quetta Press Club (IRADA, 2014).

Further than that, not only individual journalists but media organizations based in the region face challenges and difficulties. Reporting on human rights violations and conflict is severely barred in Balochistan (Agha, S., & Demeter, M, 2022).

One other thought argues that the journalists in Balochistan are affiliated with anti-federation or pro-federation and nationalists, so, biased reporting can be a serious threat to them (IFJ, 2013). In the time of conflict, media professionals often find themselves in perilous situations, risking their lives to report on critical events, such as in Balochistan. These conditions can have a heavy impact on their mental health, leading to various psychological disorders (e.g. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)). On the one hand, they are compelled to cover war activities, exposing themselves to life-threatening risks. In effect of that, they face threats and violence from various organizations and state authorities, for not complying with their demands for biased coverage. Tragically, some journalists have even lost their lives or suffered the loss of loved ones while fulfilling their duty to inform the public (Hussain & Rehman, 2015).

As well, media workers have been victimized by both sides: they are soft and easy targets (see IRADA 2014; UNESCO, 2014).

According to Masood (2017), journalists working in war zones repeatedly attempt to avoid provoking conflict groups by carefully crafting their pieces, a practice that can compromise objective journalism and critical analysis for society for real scenarios (Masood, 2017).

As– Jamil (2019), argues that media workers face dire consequences for their work due to threats from groups and security forces to alter reports in their favor ‘continuously’. In a similar context, according to Agha (2011), media workers in Pakistan face significant safety risks while working, hindering the overall functioning of the country’s media industry (Jamil, 2019; Agha, 2011).

To mitigate risks to media workers—several journalists’ unions have established editorial boards to draft sensitive news stories [hard news]. However, differing editorial policies among media organizations can hinder this effort. As IRADA (2014) noted, many media organizations lack ‘written’ safety guidelines outlining precautions for covering dangerous events, such as attacks, violence, and militant activities. Additionally, in many cases, these organizations fail to provide medical or legal aid to journalists/media workers who face violence.

According to Amnesty International, the competition and policies among Pakistani media organization(s) can foster apathy toward journalists from competing outlet(s) who are targeted, threatened, or killed. This lack of solidarity hinders unity among media organizations and their staff in addressing shared challenges (see Table 35). Furthermore, safety awareness campaigns and events for media workers in Balochistan, often organized by NGO(s) in Quetta, may not benefit journalists working in remote areas. These frontline journalists, who face the most significant risks, require ‘complete’ support and protection (see IRADA, 2014).

In an unfortunate sense, in Balochistan, there are no-go areas where journalists have no access or less access to report on news stories. To report the conflict in the region is a dangerous job (Niaz & Naqvi, 2013).

According to (IRADA, 2014) (again), despite the heightened risks faced by field reporters, camera operators, photographers, and logistics staff: many media organizations in Balochistan have yet to establish comprehensive safety guidelines. The gravity of the situation is underscored by the discovery of IFJ’s safety guidelines and SOPs in Quetta’s junk stores, highlighting the lack of execution.

The Balochistan Body of Journalists (BBOJ) points to more than ‘40’ media workers killed in the region between bomb blasts and target killings. They, especially foreign journalists

need to take permission for the news story in the region. The national media of Pakistan considered the region as ‘sensitive’ for not covering it or making ‘constructed’ realities on the Baloch issue (Zurutuza, 2023).

(Again), the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) claimed, that more than ‘28’ journalists were killed between ‘2007’ and ‘2015’ in Balochistan. In the days following the deadline, newspaper distributors refused to collect newspapers in the region (IFJ, n.d.). Also, Grenades were thrown at a press club in Hub city, and a news agency in Turbat, injuring several people (Mudassir & Kermani, 2017).

As Tahir and Niaz (2016) observe, journalists often find themselves on the frontlines of conflict activities, making them vulnerable to threats from both militants and security forces to manipulate their reporting—making agendas on specific issues (Tahir and Niaz, 2016)

Senior media professionals have expressed the challenges they face in recent years. They argue that media professionals are not allowed to work ‘independently’, free from interference, and adhere to journalistic ethics, integrity, and impartiality. This hinders their ability to report objectively and responsibly (Norris et al. 2003). Additionally, many media workers believe that professional journalism, grounded in ethical approaches, is absent in Balochistan. This has led to several challenges for journalists, ranging from threats to loss of life (Tahir & Niaz, 2016). With it, according to IRADA (2014), again, independent journalists, who lack the protection of a formal contract with a media organization or press clubs, face even greater security risks. Media organizations and press clubs in Balochistan receive minimal security compared to other parts of Pakistan. In Balochistan, media houses operate in a risky environment, facing daily coercion, pressure, and intimidation.

According to, Mezzera & Sial (2010), due to severe threats to their safety and the well-being of their (journalists) loved ones, many media workers are bound to resign or seek employment in safer places (Mezzera & Sial, 2010).

In recent years Balochistan has become a battlefield for journalism. The situation of Baloch people faced threats and it was never reported by the mainstream Pakistani media: several journalists have been killed in the last five years in various areas of Balochistan (Shirazi, 2017). However, both the government and employers demonstrate little concern for the security of media workers (see Khan, 2016). Furthermore, according to Aslam (2010), job uncertainty and the absence of recognition for journalists working in dangerous zones exacerbate the challenges they face (Aslam, 2010).

In April 2013, a Balochi-Urdu daily newspaper, *Daily Tawar*, was attacked and the website was blocked. The paper played an opinion-making role in reporting human rights violations in Balochistan. Additionally, due to the constant threats from groups, *Daily Asaap* was forced to stop its publications. It was the most widely circulated Urdu-language newspaper in the region. Furthermore, *Daily Azadi* and *Balochistan Express* also received threats (Prakash, 2013).

Freedom of the press does not exist and journalists are forced to work on the commands of ‘hegemonic’ authorities and groups.

In the same year 2013, Reporters Without Borders (RWB), released its report on press freedom, which listed the state authorities threatening and preventing the journalists from painting a realistic portrait of the situation in Balochistan. The region is turning into [a] dream for its journalists (RWB, 2013).

Further, media houses, media workers, and journalists often face multiple challenges and pressures that can influence their reporting including, advertiser, societal, cultural, and audience preferences, ownership interference, and editorial, and political influences (Shirazi, 2017).

In an argument by Andresen & Baloch (2020), at the hands of political parties and intelligence agencies, journalists in Balochistan even face ‘greater’ harassment. These threats are considered much more severe than those of the various militant organizations (Andresen & Baloch, 2020).

According to the *Daily Jung* journalist: Abdul Khaliq, the militant groups, security forces, religious organizations, and even political parties threatened them (journalists) when their positions were criticized. When we report, they dictate to us the nature of the content, which is a major problem. Another reporter of the *Dawn* said, that if we report views of agencies, the

militants say we are working for state agencies, and when we report views of militants, the agencies say we work for them (Hussian, 2015).

According to Grare (2013), media workers have also been victims of military operations in Balochistan. They often lack enough support from their media organizations, and many of them have failed to develop security and safety policies for their staff. Also, a majority of journalists in the country\* believe that media organizations fail to provide enough financial and security support to their staff, particularly those working in war zones (Amnesty International, 2014; IRADA, 2014).

Mezzera & Sial, (2010) informed, a journalist from a private TV channel noted that media organizations often neglect to train their staff in conflict-sensitive reporting, e.g. Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mezzera & Sial (2010). However, both print and electronic media often self-censor their reporting to avoid provoking federal authorities and state agencies in Balochistan (Waqar and Sadiq, 2019).

Lastly, as Norris et al. (2003) highlight, media organizations operating in war zones often navigate a ‘suffocating’ environment characterized by violence: such as coercion, bullying, threats, and various pressures. In these societies, journalists may face consequences for impartial reporting that challenges the interests of state agencies, insurgent organizations, and powerful groups.

Overall, the disappointing evidence presented in this literature review positions Balochistan as a region where journalists are at extreme risk. This situation is not merely a reflection of the broader dangers faced by journalists in the country\*, but rather a big crisis characterized by a unique and risky interplay of state and non-state actors. The violence: threats, and restrictions documented across numerous studies paint an ugly picture of a journalists’ community operating under ‘siege’.

The data and analysis reveal a deeply rooted cycle of violence: where journalists are targeted by ‘all’ sides involved in the regions’ political tensions. The tragic number of journalists killed and the documented instances of attacks on media organizations serve as a reminder of the human cost of this crisis. Furthermore, the identified systemic failures in providing protection, support, and accountability are deeply concerning. With that, the lack of safety protocols within media organizations, coupled with the insufficient response from government authorities and relevant stakeholders, leaves journalists sadly helpless.

This absence of a ‘safety’ not only endangers individuals but also contributes to a climate of impunity: where those who perpetrate violence against journalists are rarely held responsible. In essence, the literature argues that Balochistan represents a critical case study of the safety of journalists within a conflict zone.

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

This study adopts the Hierarchy of Influences model, as articulated by Shoemaker and Reese (1996, 2014). This model posits five distinct levels of influence (ranging from micro to macro) that can exert an impact on the process of news production: the individual level, routine practices, organizational structure, extra-media influences, and the social system. For data collection, a survey was conducted for the study and the researcher employed purposive sampling techniques 20 journalists were selected, who were from the both Gwadar and Kech press clubs’.

### **2.2.1 Hierarchy of Influences**

Shoemaker and Reese (2014) proposed the Hierarchy of Influences Model as a framework for understanding the multifaceted forces that impact journalistic/media practice. This model is designed to account for the multiple and concurrent forces that impinge upon media content and to elucidate the potential interactions between influences operating at different levels of analysis (Shoemaker and Reese, 2014). As Reese (2001) argued, the hierarchy model



enables researchers to situate the various influences on journalistic work within their appropriate social context. The subsequent sections of this chapter will delineate how Shoemaker and Reese (1991, 1996, 2014) conceptualized each of these levels, identifying specific influential factors at each stage, and progressing from the micro to the macro perspective (see Figure 1).

### ***Individual***

This micro level of the hierarchy is the individual [journalist] level, which examines journalists themselves, and [how their characteristics affect the production of the media content] (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014). The examination of the individual level started with the seminal Mr. Gates study by D. M. White (1950), which found that the preferences of one ‘wire’ editor could impact choices on what received dissemination in the newspaper. Others have studied how journalists self-identify with the profession and how this professional identity affects their everyday work (Deuze 2005, 2008; Ferrucci & Vos 2017; Jaakkola et al. 2015). Theorists have also found that individual characteristics such as political ideology impact news production; such as T. E. Patterson & Donsbagh (1996) found that journalists’ partisanship affected news selection and reporting (Patterson & Donsbagh, 1996). Journalists’ years of experience could also affect how they do their jobs with more veteran journalists seeking various goals, such as community impact, versus less-experienced journalists pursuing more audience-pleasing content that could potentially go viral in the masses (Ferrucci, 2018). Overall, various individual-level features at least impact news production a little, all within the context of other levels of influence.

### ***Media Routines***

This level refers to the patterned, routinized, repeated practices and forms that media workers use to do their jobs (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). Particularly, when referring to com-

munication routines, the hierarchy discusses concepts such as the beat system or ethical guidelines, routines, or norms that permeate throughout the journalism industry and are not organization-specific (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). For example, in classic media sociology literature, Tuchman, 1978; Gans, 1979 found that patterned routines such as defining news through established news values or covering a beat seemed most ‘effect full’ in terms of influencing news production (Tuchman, 1978; Gans, 1979). Additionally, Ryfe (2009) found the same; in an ethnography of a newspaper... he discovered when a new editor tried to execute a set of practices not standard in the industry and journalists essentially revolted (Ryfe, 2009). Other examples of studying this level of analysis would be how journalists’/media workers’ role conceptions are alike across the industry (Weaver et al., 2007), how objectivity is a standard norm of journalism (Schudson, 2001), or how journalists rely on standardized routines to do their jobs (Agarwal & Barthel, 2015; Singer, 2015; Tandoc & Oh, 2017). Furthermore, regardless of personal characteristics, these routines/influences have become commonplace across the industry and impact news creation/production (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014).

### ***Organization***

While the communication routines level observes practice standards across the industry/media institutions, the organizational level includes factors on which communication organizations may differ (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). When citing communication organizations, Shoemaker & Vos (2009) represent news organizations of all kinds: more limited, an organization in this context is a single newsroom and its corresponding departments and, therefore, for example, a chain is not an organization, but a conglomerate’ idea would be an organization-level variable. And, one of the main variables historically associated with the organizational level would be technology adoption as studies show that organizations themselves typically determine how to unite technology into news production (Gagnon, 2015). Also, an organization itself fixes its market orientation, which establishes how closely it cuts toward market ideas.

This can significantly determine how and what content journalists produce (Beam, 2003; Ferrucci, 2015). Ownership can also be a notable force in news production and creation (Akhavan-Majid & Boudreau, 1995; Coulson, 1994). An organization also hires its leadership and, because within any organization, leadership can influence news production (Schein, 2006). So, while communication routines cut across the industry, organizational-level influences are ones dictated within each news outlets.

### ***Social Institutions***

Partly, each of the three levels [in the hierarchy of influences] discussed in the hierarchy pertains to journalism precisely, but the industry of journalism exists within a social context (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014). The social institution level focuses on the institutions on the institutions that in some cases provide welcome influence and in others do not. The historically most studied outside industry impacting journalism is advertising, which until recently is how journalism primarily funded itself. But, far more outside institutions than advertising impact journalism practice. They [journalists] often receive much of the information that eventually becomes news through public relations professionals (Gandy, 1982). Journalism also must follow legal mandates as the government influences journalism practice in meaningful manners (Nee, 2014). Much training for journalism organizations occurs at universities, places where journalism schools and department(s) shape the idea of professionalism in the industry (Winfield, 2008). Recently, scholars have studied how institutions and quasi-institutions such as big tech firms (Vos & Russell, (2019), analytics companies (Hanush & Tandoc Jr., 2019; Tandoc, 2014), foundations (Lewis, 2011), or journalism's audience impact news production.

### ***Social System***

Finally, the most macro level of analysis in the model is the social system, which examines how, social structures, ideologies, and cultures may explain the choice and shaping of

media messages (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). More importantly, news production done within a national or cultural context that makes certain practices motivated and others practices not—e.g., taking on the surveillance role over government is not something popular in dictatorships, but a key tenet of democratic journalism (Hallin & Mancini, 2011; Hanitzsch et al. 2010). National culture also impacts how news values are determined (Shoemaker & Cohen, 2012). More popularly studied, reporters in certain countries tend to view the world through a prism of that country, which means news country of origin often influences news; for example, scholars have found journalists in the United States tend to favor stories that embody an American pastoralism (Gans, 1979), or American journalism often frames communism as a negative ideology due to the nation’s history (Herman & Chomsky, 2010). American journalism also rarely questions national belief structures such as patriarchy or capitalism (McChesney & Nichols, 2011). As, according to Shoemaker & Reese (2014) and the hierarchy of influences, regardless of variables from the other four micro levels, journalism practice will be perhaps most influenced by the social system within which it exists.

In this context, this model has been employed as a significant model for identifying the challenges of journalists working in the Gwadar and Kech district of Balochistan.

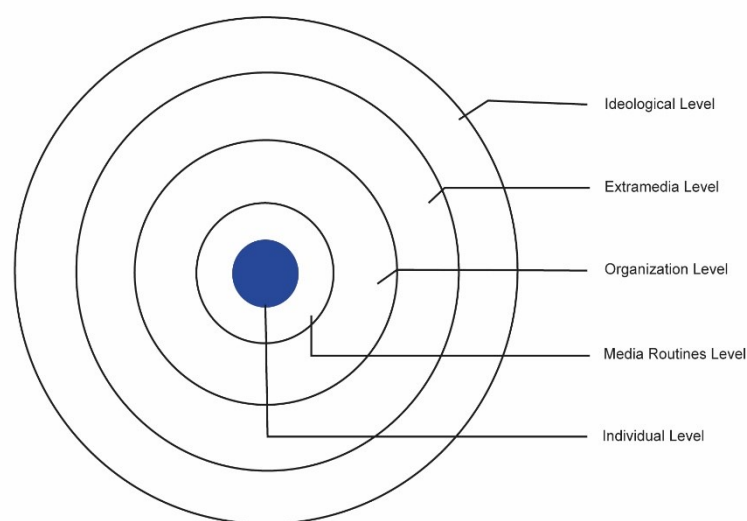


Figure 1: Hierarchy of Influences (Shoemaker & Reese 1996, 2014)

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

For this study, the researcher has opted for a mix method research methodology to collect data and achieve the stated objectives. The Hierarchy of Influences Model is employed as the theoretical framework to analyze the collected data and understand the various levels of challenges influencing the 'journalist's work.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

\This study utilizes a mix method research design to investigate the challenges encountered by journalists in the Gwadar and Kech districts of Balochistan. The methodology is centered on a survey method to systematically collect empirical data from a representative sample of journalists operating in this region. This approach was chosen to provide a more distinct and statistically verifiable understanding of the challenges.

The survey instrument consists of 40 primary questions, which were meticulously developed to address two principal research questions and variables guiding the study. These questions are structured to capture a comprehensive range of issues, from security to the structural/security challenges they (journalists) face. By using a mix method framework, the study aims to generate a deeper academic understanding of the media landscape in a high-conflict zone like Balochistan.

Similary, for that survey, the researcher has taken 40 meain questions to ask the respondent of the study, These questions have been taken by 02 main research questions.

#### **3.2 Population**

According to Dominic & Wimmer, a population is a set of subjects with similar characteristics Dominic & Wimmer (2013). The Journalists working in Gwadar (29) and Kech (15)

districts are the ‘overall’ population of the study. In this research, the total population comprises 29 journalists registered with the Gwadar Press Club (consisting of three main Tehsil, Pasni, Jiwani, and Ormara) and 15 journalists registered with the Turbat Press Club in Kech.

To obtain the research sample, a systematic selection of 10 journalists from each press club was undertaken. Initially, comprehensive lists of all 29 from Gwadar Press Club, and 15 from Turbat Press Club, respectively, were compiled and arranged in alphabetical order. Subsequently, an invitation to participate in the survey was to be extended to all registered journalists on these lists. From the pool of respondents who agreed to participate, the first 10 consenting journalists from each press club have been selected to constitute the final research sample. This approach combined an exhaustive initial outreach with a subsequent convenience-based selection of participants based on their willingness to engage with the study.

### **3.3. Sampling**

Purposive sampling has been utilized to choose key informants like as experienced and informative journalists, ensuring a thorough examination of viewpoints on the challenges in Balochistan journalism in Gwadar and Kech districts. According to Tongco (2007), purposive sampling is a deliberate choice of an informant due to the qualities the informant processes. It is a non-random technique that does not need underlying theories or a set number of informants. In purposive non-random sampling, the researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by knowledge or experience. Key informants are observant, reflective members of the community of interest who know much about the culture and are able and willing to share their knowledge with the researcher (Tongco, 2007).

### 3.3.1 Sampling size

There are 44 registered working journalists/media professionals in the two selected regions (Gwadar and Kech) of Balochistan. To attain a manageable and researchable sample size, the researcher employed purposive sampling, a non-random sampling technique. The sample size for this research comprises twenty (20) working journalists from the combined population of these two regions. The researcher compiled an alphabetical list of all 44 members of the selected population and assigned them sequential numbers. Subsequently, purposive sampling was applied to these purposively selected group(s). Utilizing the formula for the sampling interval ( $k = N/n$ ), where (N) represents the total number of units in the selected population (44) and (n) represents the chosen sample size (20), the interval was calculated as  $44 / 20 = 2.2$ . This indicates that, following a random start, approximately every second member from the alphabetized list has been selected to participate in the study until the target sample size of 20 is achieved.

<b>Table 1: Sample description</b>		
<b>Territory</b>	<b>Gwadar</b>	<b>Kech</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	10	10
Female	0	0

### 3.4. Unit of Analysis

Every selected journalist within the sample size of 20 journalists is the unit of analysis in this study.

### 3.5. Major Variables of the Study

The various challenges faced by journalists in Balochistan are the independent variables, and the resulting impact or effect on the journalists, their work, or the media environment is the dependent variable.

### **3.5.1. Independent Variable**

#### **3.5.1.1. Security Challenges**

These include threats to the physical safety, well-being, and freedom of journalists. This could include violence: such as intimidation, harassment, surveillance, and lack of protection.

#### **3.5.1.2. Structural/Institutional Challenges**

These refer to the systemic and institutional issues within the media landscape and broader environment that hinder journalists' ability to perform their duties effectively. This could include issues like media ownership influence, lack of resources, inadequate training, weak 'legal' frameworks, political interference, and economic lack.

### **3.5.2. Dependent Variable**

#### **3.5.2.1. Impacts on Journalism**

This refers to the standard, accuracy, ethical considerations, and overall effectiveness of the journalistic content. Harm to the quality of work could manifest as: Increased self-censorship, avoiding critical or sensitive topics (e.g. human rights), reduced investigative reporting, lack of accuracy due to pressure, compromised ethical standards due to fear or external influence, limited scope and depth of reporting on issues.

### **3.6. Research Instrument**

In this study, a design questionnaire consisting of closed-ended questions served as the primary research instrument for data collection. This questionnaire, comprising a total of 40 questions, was meticulously developed to address the study's two main research questions. The questionnaire was structured into two distinct parts. Part 01 focused on gathering demographic information from the media professionals working in Gwadar and Kech, employing nominal scales for categorical data and ratio scales for calculable demographic variables. Part 02 delved



into the core research questions and the variables under study, utilizing the Likert scale to assess the respondents' attitudes, perceptions, and experiences related to the phenomena/hypothesis.

### **3.7. Procedure (Data Collection)**

For data collection, the survey method, an approach within the mix method research method, has been employed in this study. This involved the application/usage of pre-designed questionnaires as the primary instrument for data gathering from the participants (as like, in this study the data have been collected from journalists working in Gwadar and Kech district in Balochistan).

### **3.8. Data Analysis**

Data analysis is a process of summarizing the collective data and interpreting data gathered with the idea of formulating useful information, and conclusions and helping make a decision Brown, Meta. S. (2014). This study has employed mix method data analysis for conducting this survey, and the data has been analyzed through the SPSS program.

Mix method data analysis is a phenomenon's process of the description, classification, and interconnection of the researcher's concepts. At first, the problem under study needs to be described precisely. The researcher needs to describe and be able to interpret and explain the data, therefore a conceptual framework needs to each other. Furthermore, according to Flick (2014), this analysis method has some aims, such as describing the problem in some or greater detail comparing several cases on what they have in common or the differences between them developing a theory of the phenomenon under study from the analysis of empirical material/collected data (Graue, 2016).

## CHAPTER 4

### 4. DATA ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the researcher undertakes an analysis and explanation of the data relating to the challenges (security and structural or institutional) encountered by working journalists in the Gwadar and Kech districts of Balochistan. Furthermore, this chapter serves as a platform for the systematic examination, presentation, and detailed explanation of the data meticulously compiled and organized within the created tables through the SPSS program, with accompanying interpretation of the data, provided below each table. For this scholarly inquiry, the researcher employed a structured questionnaire as the primary instrument for data collection from 20 willing working journalists based in the above-mentioned districts. With a specific focus on addressing two principal research questions, the researcher collected the required data following a formal methodological approach. Additionally, this chapter aims to provide an evidence-based understanding of the multifaceted challenges confronting journalists in this geographically and socio-politically significant region of Balochistan.

<b>Table 2: Gender of the participants</b>		
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	20	100%
Female	0	0
Total	20	100%

Table 1 shows that all 20 respondents/participants (100%) were male. This reflects the prevailing disappointing context in Balochistan, where female participation in journalism, particularly in peripheral regions, such as Gwadar and Kech, remains limited.

<b>Table 3: Age of the participants</b>		
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
20-30	7	35.0%
31-40	7	35.0
41-50	6	30.0%
51-above	0	0%
Total	20	100%

The table shows that 7 participants (35.0%) belong to the 20-30 age group, and another

7 participants (35.0%) are in the 31-40 age group, while 6 participants (30.0%) are from the 41-50 age group. There were no participants (0%) in the 51-and-above age group.

<b>Table 4: Qualification</b>		
Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Intermediate	2	10.0%
Bachelors	8	40.0
Masters	10	50.0%
Total	20	100%

In this table, the majority of the participants are master qualified which 10 (50%) 8 (40%) are Bachelors and 2 (10%) are intermediate-passed participants.

<b>Table 5: Form of Organization</b>		
Form of Organization	Frequency	Percentage
Newspaper	14	70.0%
Radio	2	10.0%
Television	2	10.0%
News agency	2	10%
Total	20	100%

The table indicates the primary duties of media workers/journalists in Gwadar and Kech. The data finds that the largest amount of respondents 14 (70.0%) are working as newspaper journalists. Furthermore, 2 participants (10.0%) are engaged in radio programs, another 2 (10.0%) work in television, and 2 (10.0%) journalists are affiliated with news agencies.

<b>Table 6: Job description</b>		
Job description	Frequency	Percentage
Reporting	16	80.0%
Editing works	3	15.0%
Camerawork	1	5.0%
Total	20	100%

The table above shows the roles of journalists within various organizations. As shown, the majority of participants 16 (80.0%) are reporters, followed by those engaged in editing 3 (15.0%), and a smaller number involved in camera work 1 (5.0%).

<b>Table 7: Experience</b>		
Experience	Frequency	Percentage
01-05	7	35.0%
06-10	5	25.0%
11-15	3	15.0%
16-20	5	25.0%
Total	20	100%

This table illustrates the distribution of participants based on their years of professional experience in journalism, categorized into four ranges: 01-05 years, 06-10 years, 11-15 years, and 16-20 years. The largest group, comprising 7 participants (35%), has 01-05 years of experience. Following this, 5 respondents (25%) have 06-10 years of experience. Another 5 individuals/respondents (25%) fall into the 16-20 years category. The smallest group, with 3 (15%) has 11-15 years of experience.

<b>Table 8: To what extent do you cover political issues?</b>		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	11	55.0%
Agree	5	25.0%
Neutral	3	15.0%
Disagree	1	5.0%
Total	20	100%

This table highlights that political issues are a common area of coverage among the participants/journalists in Gwadar and Turbat in Kech, with a strong tendency toward active engagement. This table shows participants'/journalists' responses to whether they cover political issues in their work: A majority: of 11 participants (55%), strongly agree that they cover political issues. Another 5 (25%) agree, indicating that 80% of the participants overall affirm their involvement in political reporting. 3 respondents/journalists 15% chose a neutral position, possibly reflecting occasional or conditional coverage of the political issues. Only 1 respondent (5%) disagrees: suggesting that very few participants avoid political reporting.

<b>Table 9:</b>	<b>To what extent do you feel insecure while covering political issues?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	7	35.0%
Agree	3	15.0%
Neutral	6	30.0%
Disagree	2	10.0%
Strongly disagree	2	10.0%
Total	20	100%

This table shows whether journalists feel insecure when covering political issues: A notable 7 participants (35%) strongly agree, and another 15% (3 participants) agree, indicating that 50% of the respondents feel some level of insecurity in this context. 6 respondents 30% chose a neutral position, which might reflect uncertainty, situational variation, or reluctance to express their views openly. Meanwhile, 2 journalists/participants (10%) disagree and another 10% (2 participants) strongly disagree, showing a small proportion who do not perceive insecurity when reporting on political matters, but a majority feel insecure.

<b>Table 10:</b>	<b>To what extent do you believe journalists in Balochistan face security challenges?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	15	35.0%
Agree	3	15.0%
Neutral	2	30.0%
Total	20	100%

This table addresses a significant 15 participants (75%) who strongly agree that journalists face security challenges, reflecting a strong agreement on the matter. Another 3 respondents (15%) agree, pushing the total agreement level to 90%, which indicates widespread alarm. Only 2 participants/journalists/respondents 10% remain neutral, with no participants disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

<b>Table 11: To what extent do security challenges affect your journalism?</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	17	85.0%
Agree	2	10.0%
Neutral	1	5.0%
Total	20	100%

These results strongly suggest that security concerns have a significant and direct effect on journalistic practices in the Makran region (particularly in Gwadar and Kech districts, possibly influencing the topics covered, the depth of reporting, or even the willingness to report on sensitive issues, and conflict journalism. Table 10 shows the impact of security challenges on journalists' work: A large 17 participants (85%) strongly agree that their journalism is affected by security challenges, indicating a widespread and intense impact. An additional 2 participants (10%) agree, bringing total agreement to 95%. Only 5% (1 participant) remained neutral, and especially, no participants disagreed.

<b>Table 12: To what extent have you faced direct threats or violence due to your work as a journalist?</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	11	55.0%
Agree	4	20.0%
Neutral	2	10.0%
Disagree	2	10.0%
Strongly disagree	1	5.0%
Total	20	100%

The above table highlights journalists' first-hand/physical experiences with threats or violence in the course of their work as a journalist or media workers. As the table shows, a significant number of 11 participants (55%) strongly agree that they have faced direct threats or violence. An additional 20% (4 participants) agree, bringing the total who have experienced or acknowledged such dangers to 75%. 10% (2 participants) are neutral, potentially indicating indirect experiences or uncertainty. Meanwhile, 15% (2 disagree, 1 strongly disagree) report no such experiences.

<b>Table 13:</b>	<b>To what extent did you ever get physical injuries covering political issues?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	6	30.0%
Agree	1	5.0%
Neutral	2	10.0%
Disagree	3	15.0%
Strongly disagree	8	40.0%
Total	20	100%

Number twelve table explores whether journalists have suffered physical injuries while covering political issues: A joint 7 participants/respondents (35%) agree or strongly agree that they have experienced physical injury in such situations while doing their work as a journalist. 10% (2 participants) remain neutral, possibly representing doubt or unwillingness to disclose the fact. On the other hand, a larger group/ respondent 55% (3 disagree), and (8 strongly disagree). They deny having suffered physical injuries while they work.

<b>Table 14:</b>	<b>To what extent did you ever need to go into isolation after receiving threats?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	6	30.0%
Neutral	3	15.0%
Disagree	3	15.0%
Strongly disagree	8	40.0%
Total	20	100%

This table shows that 30% (6 participants) strongly agree that they have gone into isolation after following threats, showing a serious level of physical and mental impact. 15% (3 participants) are neutral, suggesting ambiguity or possibly limited but dangerous incidents. Meanwhile, a majority, 3 disagree (15%) and 8 respondents (40%) strongly disagree.

These findings show that although over half of respondents did not resort to isolation, a significant minority (30%) did, reflecting the strictness and psychological toll of threats faced by some journalists in Makran. This adds a deeper, more personal cover to the data on security challenges presented already.

<b>Table 15:</b>	<b>To what extent do you feel adequately trained to handle threats or risky situations?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	3	15.0%
Agree	1	5.0%
Disagree	4	20.0%
Strongly disagree	12	60.0%
Total	20	100%

The majority of the journalists indicate a critical gap in safety training for journalists in Balochistan (in Gwadar and Kech). It highlights the urgent need for capacity-building programs, safety workshops, and institutional support to equip media professionals with the skills to handle threats and risky environments effectively. Such as, the table shows Only 20% (3 strongly agree and 1 agree) of respondents feel they are adequately trained. Furthermore, 80% of participants express doubts; 12 participants (60%) strongly disagree with the statement. Another 20% (4 participants) disagree.

<b>Table 16:</b>	<b>To what extent do you personally adopt safety measures while reporting?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	3	15.0%
Agree	2	10%
Neutral	2	10.0%
Disagree	6	30.0%
Strongly disagree	7	35.0%
Total	20	100%

This table explores whether journalists personally take safety precautions while on the job: but, unfortunately, only 25% (3 strongly agree and 2 agree) of respondents report that they actively adopt safety measures. Additionally, 10% (2 participants) are neutral. A significant 65% (6 disagree and 7 strongly disagree), do not follow personal safety practices during reporting.



<b>Table 17:</b>	<b>To what extent do you feel your family is at risk because of your profession?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	9	45.0%
Agree	3	15%
Neutral	1	5.0%
Disagree	4	20.0%
Strongly disagree	3	15.0%
Total	20	100%

Table number sixteen clarifies the extent to which journalists perceive threats to their families as a result of their profession in Gwadar and Kech. As with data, a majority, 60% (9 strongly agree and 3 agree). They believe their families are at risk due to their work in journalism. 1 respondent (5%) is neutral, possibly unclear to express their views. And, additionally, 4 disagree with 3 strongly disagree (35%) do not share the same concern, although they are a clear minority.

This data shows that a deeply concerning reality for many journalists/media workers in Balochistan, threats are not just professional but personal, extending to their loved ones. This emotional and psychological burden likely adds to the stress of reporting in volatile conditions and may impact the freedom, depth, and consistency of their work as journalists.

<b>Table 18:</b>	<b>To what extent do you face challenges while gathering information?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	8	40.0%
Agree	7	35%
Neutral	3	15.0%
Disagree	1	5.0%
Strongly disagree	1	5.0%
Total	20	100%

In this table a majority of participants (75% (8 strongly agree and 7 agree) of journalists report that they face challenges when collecting information. 3 respondents (5%) are neutral. However, only, 10% (1 disagree and 1 strongly disagree) do not face such issues. Accordingly,

these findings indicate that access to information is a major hurdle for journalists in Balochistan.

<b>Table 19:</b>	<b>To what extent do you believe the lack of security measures impacts your ability to report safely??</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	8	40.0%
Agree	4	20%
Neutral	3	15.0%
Disagree	2	10.0%
Strongly disagree	3	15.0%
Total	20	100%

60% (8 strongly agree and 4 agree) believe that lack of proper security measures compromises their safety while reporting. 15% are neutral, which might point to uncertainty or mixed experiences. While, 25% (2 disagree with 3 strongly disagree) feel that the lack of security measures doesn't affect their reporting, though this is a clear minority.

This data reinforces previous findings that security concerns are a dominant barrier for journalists in Gwadar and Kech districts. The perception that institutional or governmental safety practices are insufficient has a tangible impact, possibly leading to: Self-censorship, Avoidance of sensitive topics, and reduced field engagement.

<b>Table 20:</b>	<b>To what extent have you ever had to self-censor your reporting to ensure your safety?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	8	40.0%
Agree	3	25.0%
Disagree	3	10.0%
Strongly disagree	6	30.0%
Total	20	100%

This table finds whether journalists in Balochistan have ever modified or withheld information in their reporting to protect themselves from potential threats. A joint 8 participants strongly agree and 3 others agree) (55%), admit to practicing self-censorship to ensure personal

safety 15% (3 respondents) disagree, suggesting they have not altered their work despite risks. 30% (6 respondents) strongly disagree, possibly indicating they are either very committed to press freedom or operate in a relatively safer environment.

<b>Table 21:</b>	<b>To what extent do you believe self-censorship impacts the ‘quality’ of your reporting?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	10	50.0%
Agree	4	20%
Disagree	3	15.0%
Strongly disagree	3	15.0%
Total	20	100%

In this table, whether journalists feel that self-censorship affects the quality of their work. 10 strongly agree with 4 agree (jointly) (70%) have confidence that self-censorship negatively impacts the quality of their work/journalism. 15% of respondents (3 disagree and 3 strongly disagree), who do not think self-censorship affects their work.

<b>Table 22:</b>	<b>To what extent do you believe self-censorship impacts the ‘accuracy’ of your reporting?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	9	45.0%
Agree	6	30%
Disagree	3	15.0%
Strongly disagree	2	10.0%
Total	20	100%

Of the results, 9 strongly agree (45%) and 6 agree (30%) feel that accuracy is compromised when they censor themselves. Only 3 participants disagree (15%) with the other 2 participants strongly disagree (10%) believe self-censorship does not affect accuracy in their journalism.

This supports earlier findings/table that self-censorship is not only limiting journalistic expression but also distorting/hiding facts or leaving out crucial details. The suggestion is that... Journalists might avoid reporting sensitive truths, altering the public’s understanding of

events. Further, fear of the results of their works leads to cautious, filtered reporting, which weakens journalism's watchdog role (in a conflict zone more importantly).

<b>Table 23:</b>	<b>To what extent do you ever receive threats or intimidation from state actors?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	7	35.0%
Agree	6	30.0%
Neutral	1	5.0%
Disagree	1	5.0%
Strongly disagree	5	25.0%
Total	20	100%

The above table examines whether journalists in Balochistan experience violence (such as threats or intimidation) from state actors, such as security forces, intelligence agencies, or government officials. A combined 65% (7 strongly agree and 6 agree) report receiving threats from state actors. 25% (5 respondents/participants) strongly deny such experiences. A small portion (10%) remains neutral or disagrees, indicating a more cautious or mixed perception.

<b>Table 24:</b>	<b>To what extent do you ever receive threats or intimidation from militant organizations?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	1	5.0%
Agree	3	15.0%
Neutral	1	5.0%
Disagree	2	10.0%
Strongly disagree	13	65.0%
Total	20	100%

A significant 65% strongly disagree with the statement, and only 20% (1 strongly agree and 3 agree) report receiving such threats. This contrasts sharply with Table 22, where 65% reported threats from state actors. This table suggests that state actors are perceived as a greater source of violence (threats and intimidation) compared to militant groups/insurgents. The data may reflect the geographical, political, or operational dynamics in the region, where journalists perhaps have more contact with or fear from official forces than from militants. It could also

imply controlled reporting on militancy, and conflict, perhaps, limiting encounters with such organizations or reducing perceived threats from them. The table suggests.

<b>Table 25: To what extent do you ever receive threats or intimidation from religious groups?</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	2	10.0%
Agree	4	20.0%
Neutral	3	15.0%
Disagree	2	10.0%
Strongly disagree	9	45.0%
Total	20	100%

This table explores whether journalists in Balochistan report threats or intimidation from religious groups; 30% (2 participants strongly agree and 4 agree, acknowledge receiving threats, while a combined 55% (2 disagree with 9 strongly disagree) deny such experiences. 15% remain neutral, possibly demonstrating doubt or unwillingness to disclose.

From these findings, we can argue that religious groups are seen as a moderate threat, though not as dominant as state actors (Table 22) and more significant than militant organizations (Table 23). The perceived risk is real but not overwhelming, which may reflect the nature of topics covered (e.g., avoiding sensitive religious reporting), or the influence of religious conservatism on journalistic freedom in some regions.

<b>Table 26: To what extent do you ever receive threats or intimidation from dominant groups?</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	4	20.0%
Agree	5	25.0%
Neutral	2	10.0%
Disagree	2	10.0%
Strongly disagree	7	35.0%
Total	20	100%

The above table considers whether journalists in Balochistan report threats or intimidation from dominant groups, such as socio-economically powerful. As shown in the table, 4

participants (20%) strongly agree and 5 (25%) agree and report experiencing such intimidation. On the other hand, 35% strongly disagree, and another 10% disagree, indicating a divided experience. While 10% remain neutral.

<b>Table 27: To what extent have you ever been censored by your employer?</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	8	40.0%
Agree	2	10.0%
Neutral	2	10.0%
Disagree	2	10.0%
Strongly disagree	6	30.0%
Total	20	100%

This table investigates whether journalists in Balochistan have experienced censorship from their employers, meaning, they are directly told not to report certain topics or to alter content. To answer this question, the participants responded: 50% (40% strongly agree and 10% agree) say they have been censored by their employer. 30% strongly disagree, signifying they have not experienced censorship. 10% remain neutral, on the other hand, 10% disagree, suggesting no clear censorship.

<b>Table 28: To what extent have you ever been censored by your government?</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	8	40.0%
Agree	1	5.0%
Neutral	3	15.0%
Disagree	3	15.0%
Strongly disagree	5	25.0%
Total	20	100%

As shown in this table, 8 participants (40%) strongly agree and 1 (5%) agree). It reports that they have experienced government censorship. While, 3 (15%) responded disagree and 3 (15%) responded as neutral 25% strongly disagree, indicating they have not been censored by the government.

Nearly half of the journalists feel that the state plays an active role in suppressing journalistic content. This finding, alongside employer censorship (Table 26), reflects a restrictive media environment, where both institutional and governmental forces may limit press freedom. The presence of 15% neutrality could suggest indirect or ambiguous forms of censorship, such as implicit threats or bureaucratic hurdles.

<b>Table 29: To what extent do you believe that there is a lack of political will to address the issue of impunity for security issues against journalists in Gwadar and Kech districts?</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	10	50.0%
Agree	6	30.0%
Neutral	2	10.0%
Disagree	1	5.0%
Strongly disagree	1	5.0%
Total	20	100%

A majority (80%) of journalists agree that there is a lack of political will to address the issue of impunity concerning the safety and security of journalists in Gwadar and Kech. Only 10% disagree (5% disagree and 5% strongly disagree), suggesting slight confidence in political institutions and government influences. The 10% neutral response shows a small portion of journalists are either unsure or unwilling to comment on this question. Possibly, due to the sensitivity of the topic. This data strongly indicates perceived negligence or inaction by political leaders/and government lacking in the problem.

The findings support the broader narrative emerging from previous tables: that journalists in Balochistan, especially in Gwadar and Kech, work in an environment of insecurity with limited institutional support. Accordingly, it also emphasizes the need for policy reform and political responsibility to improve press freedom and journalist safety in a conflict zone like Balochistan.

<b>Table: 30</b>	<b>To what extend do you receive any formal training on conflict-sensitive reporting or personal security?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	5	25.0%
Agree	3	15.0%
Neutral	3	15.0%
Strongly disagree	9	45.0%
Total	20	100%

As shown in this table, a large amount (45%) of respondents strongly disagree/agree with the statement or question, arguing they do not receive formal training, which is unfortunate. Combined with the 15% who are neutral, 60% of journalists either lack access to or are unaware of training opportunities. Only 40% (25% strongly agree and 15% agree) have received some form of training... but still it is a minority. This lack of training, especially in a war region like Balochistan, raises serious concerns about journalists' preparation for conflict reporting and handling security threats. So, it is a structural/institutional issue.

The data supports the findings from Table 14, where most respondents felt inadequately trained to handle threats. There seems to be a critical gap in institutional support and safety measures for journalists/media workers operating in vulnerable zones like Makran in Balochistan.

<b>Table 31:</b>	<b>To what extend do you feel the press associations in Balochistan adequately address journalists' security issues?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	2	10.0%
Agree	4	20.0%
Disagree	2	10.0%
Strongly disagree	12	60.0%
Total	20	100%

Press associations, often responsible for advocacy and emergency response, are perceived as failing to protect or represent journalists in Balochistan. This could be a barrier to



collective action, discourage threat reporting, and contribute to isolation and vulnerability among journalists.

In the table, as clearly shows, a majority (60%) strongly disagree and agree that press associations effectively address security concerns, and only 10% strongly agree and 20% agree (30%) feeling positive about their role, the confidence in these associations is particularly less.

<b>Table 32: Are you aware of any safety workshops or trainings aimed at journalists in Balochistan?</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	5	25.0%
Neutral	5	25.0%
Strongly disagree	10	50.0%
Total	20	100%

Half of the respondents (50%) strongly disagree and disagree that they are aware of any such workshops or training about their safety. Only 25% strongly agree, indicating low awareness and outreach of existing programs, if any.

The 25% neutral responses suggest uncertainty, possibly due to a lack of access to information or communication about these programs.

The findings highlight a significant gap in outreach or availability of safety and training programs for journalists in Balochistan. This complements earlier tables showing that many feel unprepared or unsupported in handling threats, emphasizing the urgent need for structured and accessible capacity-building efforts.

<b>Table 33: To what extent does your organization handle emergencies: like threats or other security issues?</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	4	20.0%
Agree	3	15.0%
Neutral	1	5.0%
Disagree	2	10.0%
Strongly disagree	10	50.0%
Total	20	100%

The above table shows, a majority of the participants (50%) strongly disagree that their organization has protocols/practices to handle emergencies like threats or security incidents. Only 35% (Strongly Agree and Agree (combine) report any organizational support/help in serious times. The presence of 10% who disagree and 5% neutral suggests variation or lack of clarity in emergency response policies across media organizations. This analysis strengthens a serious institutional gap in how media organizations in Balochistan (Gwadar and Kech) manage the security of their journalists/workers. This is particularly concerning given the high frequency of threats and self-censorship reported in previous tables. There is a clear need for organizational-level crisis management methods, training, and support systems.

<b>Table 34: To what extent do you trust local law enforcement agencies to protect journalists?</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	4	20.0%
Neutral	2	10.0%
Disagree	3	15.0%
Strongly disagree	11	55.0%
Total	20	100%

This table underscores a deep trust deficit between journalists and local law enforcement agencies in Balochistan. In an environment where journalists face threats from various actors, this lack of institutional trust exacerbates vulnerability and likely contributes to widespread self-censorship and isolation. The findings show, that a clear majority (55%) strongly disagree that local law enforcement is trustworthy in protecting journalists, or somehow, they, themselves use violence on journalists. Combined with the 15% who disagree, 70% of respondents express a lack of trust. Only 20% strongly agree, and 10% remain neutral, suggesting very limited confidence in law enforcement support. The data may be so.

<b>Table 35:</b>	<b>To what extent do you trust the local law government to protect journalists?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	5	25.0%
Neutral	3	15.0%
Disagree	3	15.0%
Strongly disagree	9	45.0%
Total	20	100%

45% of respondents strongly disagree that the local government offers protection to journalists. With an additional 15% disagreeing, that makes 60% of respondents expressing distrust. While, 25% strongly agree, and 15% are neutral. This finding also shows that they [journalists] do not trust the local government to ensure their safety.

<b>Table 36:</b>	<b>To what extent do you believe civil society can protect journalists from security risks?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	6	30.0%
Agree	2	10.0%
Disagree	1	5.0%
Strongly disagree	11	50.0%
Total	20	100%

Regardless of civil society's role as a ... watchdog and supporter of press freedom, a majority of respondents do not believe it effectively protects journalists in conflict regions like Gwadar and Kech [*Makran*].

This table shows, with only 40% expressing some level of agreement (30% strongly agree and 10% agree), there's a lack of faith in civil society's protective role [in the perspective of Gwadar and Kech-based journalists]. A mere 5% actively disagreed and polarized the argument of civil society protection.

<b>Table 37:</b>	<b>To what extent do security concerns influence the way you choose stories or topics?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	9	45.0%
Agree	4	20.0%
Neutral	4	20.0%
Disagree	3	15.0%
Total	20	100%

This data reflects a chilling effect on press freedom. 65% of journalists/participants (45% strongly agree with 20% agree) confirm that security issues affect their topic/work choices. 20% are neutral, possibly indicating conditional influence. Only 15% disagree, implying that a vast majority (85%) feel the burden of safety when selecting topics or ideas.

<b>Table 38:</b>	<b>To what extent do you avoid reporting on specific issues to avoid backlash or danger?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	12	60.0%
Agree	2	10.0%
Neutral	3	15.0%
Disagree	3	15.0%
Total	20	100%

This table strongly underlines the atmosphere of fear and self-censorship in Gwadar and Kech. When 7 out of 10 journalists actively avoid certain topics, it signals not just a threat to press freedom but also the public's right to information. This aligns with earlier findings on how security concerns and threats directly influence editorial decision-making.

A significant majority (70%) of respondents (comprising 60% who strongly agree and 10% who agree) deliberately avoid reporting on certain issues due to fear of backlash or harm [violence]. Fifteen percent expressed neutrality, potentially suggesting that their decision-making is context-specific. Conversely, 15% disagreed, indicating that a minority of journalists do not feel bound to avoid sensitive topics due to such pressures. Ultimately, for their safety, they might choose to avoid any issue.

<b>Table 39:</b>	<b>To what extent does your fear of surveillance or monitoring affect your work?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	12	60.0%
Agree	5	25.0%
Strongly disagree	3	15.0%
Total	20	100%

The table reveals that a substantial (85%) of participants (comprising 60% who strongly agree and 25% who agree) perceive that the fear of surveillance or monitoring negatively impacts their professional activities. A small minority (15%) strongly disagree, suggesting either a lack of perceived risk or a feeling of being unaffected by surveillance and monitoring.

<b>Table 40:</b>	<b>To what extent do you think journalists in rural areas face more significant security threats than those in urban centers?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	13	65.0%
Agree	2	10.0%
Neutral	3	15.0%
Disagree	1	5.0%
Strongly disagree	1	5.0%
Total	20	100%

As this table indicates, a significant majority (75%) of journalists (65% strongly agree and 10% agree) believe that journalists in rural areas face greater security risks compared to their urban counterparts. This question was taken recognizing that the selected settings [Gwadar and Kech] include both rural and urban faces/modes of life. However, 15% remained neutral, indicating doubt or a lack of strong opinion. A small minority (10%) disagreed, with only 5% strongly disagreeing, reinforcing the consensus that rural areas are more dangerous for journalists/media workers.

<b>Table 41: To what extent do you believe journalists can influence positive change despite the challenges they face?</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	8	40.0%
Agree	3	15.0%
Disagree	3	15.0%
Strongly disagree	6	30.0%
Total	20	100%

The data presented in this table illustrates a divided perspective on the potential of journalism to change. While a degree of optimism, the substantial amount of respondents who disagree (45%) suggests that many journalists perceive their efforts as constrained by security concerns, insufficient support, and prevailing systemic obstacles. This result is significant as it highlights not only external pressures but also internalized regarding the efficacy of journalism within this region. 40% of journalists strongly agree that, nevertheless the challenges, they retain the capacity to influence positive change, indicating a level of positivity.

An additional 15% agree, representing a minority who hold an optimistic/hopeful view on journalism's role in driving change. Conversely, a combined 45% (comprising 15% who disagree and 30% who strongly disagree) express doubt about the ability of journalists to effect change due to the security and structural challenges they encounter in the region.

<b>Table 42: To what extent do you believe solidarity among journalists plays in mitigating security risks?</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	9	45.0%
Agree	2	10.0%
Neutral	2	10.0%
Strongly disagree	7	35.0%
Total	20	100%

The data in the table shows that a majority of respondents (55%, comprising 45% who strongly agree and 10% who agree) perceive solidarity among journalists as a potential means to reduce or manage security risks, proposing a belief in collective protection/with a collective

voice. Nevertheless, a large number of participants/working journalists (35%) strongly disagree. Furthermore, 10% expressed neutrality, possibly showing a lack of evidence regarding the impact/influence of journalistic unity ...

<b>Table 43: To what extent do you face challenges from state authorities while reporting?</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	7	35.0%
Agree	6	30.0%
Neutral	3	15.0%
Strongly disagree	4	20.0%
Total	20	100%

A majority (65%) of the samples agree (6 participants) and strongly agree (7 participants) that they face challenges/interruptions from state authorities during their reporting/journalism. On the other hand, 3 respondents (15%) are neutral. 20% strongly disagree, showing that not all journalists experience these challenges, perhaps, depending on their beat/type of content.

<b>Table 44: To what extent do you face pressure from political parties regarding your reporting?</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	7	35.0%
Agree	3	15.0%
Neutral	4	20.0%
Strongly disagree	6	30.0%
Total	20	100%

Table number 44 shows that 50% of respondents either strongly or somewhat concur that they experience pressure emanating from political parties [there are a bunch of political parties in Kech and Turbat], thereby underscoring a level of political influence exerted upon local journalistic performances. A further 20% expressed neutrality, potentially reflecting either ambivalence, a lack of direct personal exposure to such pressures, or a careful method of

saying their stance on this potentially sensitive subject, e.g. conflict and human rights violations. Particularly, 30% registered strong disagreement (strongly disagree).

<b>Table 45:</b>	<b>To what extent do you face pressure from tribal groups regarding your reporting?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	1	5.0%
Agree	2	10.0%
Disagree	1	5.0%
Strongly disagree	16	80.0%
Total	20	100%

The collected data presented in this table recommends that tribal groups do not constitute a significant source of pressure for the majority of journalists operating in Gwadar and Kech. This finding may be attributed to the distinct socio-political context of the Makran region, which, unlike other areas of Balochistan, is considered more secular. Consequently, this regional characteristic may explain the high proportion (80%) of participants who disagreed with the notion of tribal pressure/impact.

A substantial majority (80%) registered strong disagreement with the question that they experience pressure from tribal groups/sardars. A mere 15% of respondents reported experiencing any form of pressure (either strong agreement or agreement), a figure lower than the reported pressures emanating from political parties, dominant societal groups, or state authorities and militant organizations.

<b>Table 46:</b>	<b>To what extent do you believe your employer/institution provides adequate security support?</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	1	5.0%
Agree	2	10.0%
Neutral	3	15.0%
Disagree	2	10.0%
Strongly disagree	12	60.0%
Total	20	100%

Presented data in the table herein underscores a critical lack of institutional support for



the safety and security of journalists operating in Gwadar and Kech. There is a lot of disagreement on this question. A substantial majority (60%) submit strong disagreement with the assertion/idea that their employer provides adequate security support for journalists. When aggregated with those who simply disagree (10%), a significant proportion (70%) of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with their institution's approach to ensuring their safety. No one provides security measures. Conversely, a mere 15% (comprising those who strongly agree or agree) indicated a feeling of being adequately supported by their organizations and employers. The remaining 15% adopted a neutral stance of security support by their employers and organizations.

<b>Table 47: To what extent do you believe the government provides adequate security measures?</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	1	5.0%
Agree	3	15.0%
Neutral	2	10.0%
Disagree	3	15.0%
Strongly disagree	11	55.0%
Total	20	100%

Regarding the inquiry concerning governmental seriousness of security measures for journalists/media workers, a substantial majority (55%) registered strongly disagree. When aggregated with those who simply disagree (15%), a significant proportion (70%) of respondents stated a lack of trust or dissatisfaction with governmental provisions for their protection. Conversely, a mere 20% (comprising those who agree and strongly agree) perceived the government's efforts as sufficient in terms of their interests. The remaining 10% who adopted a neutral stance may reflect either varied experiences or a lack of clarity regarding governmental policies and their implementation or only want to avoid this topic.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

This chapter discusses the main findings of the study within the model of Shoemaker and Reese's (1996, 2014) five-factor model introduced in our theoretical framework. We applied this model as it covers the most important factors that influence journalists' work when reporting from conflict zones, and because it helps to provide structural interpretations of the challenges journalists face.

#### **5.1. Discussion**

The findings of this study reveal that journalists working in Gwadar and Kech are embedded in a high-risk, conflict-laden, and surveillance-heavy environment, where journalism itself becomes a matter of personal survival. Security is not a peripheral concern but a central [every journalist must be protected, whether peripheral or central], a daily challenge that permeates every aspect of their professional life.

##### **5.1.1 Baloch Journalists Amidst Challenges**

The majority of journalists report being in a permanent state of insecurity, with 75% indicating either direct threats or intimidation from state actors (see Table 23). This figure is even more concerning when compared to lower threat levels from militant (20%) or religious groups (30%), representing that state institutions, rather than non-state actors are seen as the primary sources of insecurity. This challenges popular narratives that often externalize threats to journalists as coming from insurgents or extremist groups.

Further, the state emerges as [both] regulator and aggressor, contributing not only to active censorship but also to an environment of fear that compels journalists to regulate themselves. With 60% of respondents stating that fear of surveillance/monitoring affects their work

as a journalist (see Table 39), it becomes clear that this fear is institutional and omnipresent/present everywhere. Furthermore, the journalists in Gwadar and Kech function in a suffocating reality as they are continually seeing/monitoring, and judging.

Additionally, more than 65% of journalists/media workers admitted to engaging in self-censorship to protect themselves (see Table 19), while over 70% asserted that this affects both the [quality] and [accuracy] of their work (see Tables 20 and 21). In effect, these are not minor compromises: they show a ‘paradigm’ where truth reporting can be life-losing or punished. Journalists no longer act as watchdogs of power but are instead reduced to cautious narrators, carefully tiptoeing around issues that might invite retribution.

Through media, this creates a deep distortion of public discourse. Sensitive issues: such as state violence, enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, or corruption, entirely, are either underreported or ignored. Thus, the public’s right to information/knowning is systematically compromised, and journalism stops to fulfill its democratic function.

Furthermore, (Tables 36 and 37) strengthen the above with clear data: 65% of journalists say security concerns shape their story selection, and 60% of them (journalists) admit to completely avoiding specific issues. Now, this indicates a widespread and deliberate editorial avoidance not only shaped by individual fear but embedded in the operational logic of journalism in these districts: Gwadar/Turbat. Important issues remain untouched, not due to lack of relevance or professionalism, but because of potential consequences such as violence: death threat(s), arrest(s), and assassination(s).

More than that, the insecurity [in Gwadar and Kech] journalists’ experience is not accidental or situational, however, it is a structurally maintained problem, where this—has been imposed. The findings point to severe institutional failure, both in terms of protection and support.

### 5.1.2 Everything Failed to Protect the Journalists: But They Are Optimistic

Applying this to all, journalists uttered low confidence in measurable mechanisms—whether from their own media institution(s), press association(s), or the state. A staggering 60% of respondents strongly disagreed that their [employer] provides satisfactory security support (see Table 45), while 55% felt the same about the government’s role (*in* Table 46). With that, these figures/findings highlight a failure of institutional responsibility for journalists’ protection.

Despite the risky reporting environment: journalists lack basic conflict/war-reporting training, with 45% saying they never received any formal safety instruction (see Table 30). There is also low awareness of safety workshops or support programs for journalists (Table 32). These data suggest that risk is normal, and protecting infrastructure is either underdeveloped or deliberately neglected/nonseriousness of a political sector.

Furthermore, institutional censorship is highly prevalent. 40% of journalists report being censored by their employers (Table 26), and a similar number (45%) report direct censorship by the government on specific beats, e.g. human rights/Baloch-oriented issues (Table 28). More—these analyses mirror not just an absence of protection but an active collusion in silencing by the journalists. However, in many cases, employers act as proxies for state or political interests, controlling narratives and punishing dissents.

Thus, the structural challenge of journalists is twofold: first, not only are journalists left unprotected, but second, they are also disciplined from within their ranks, which erodes any semblance of editorial autonomy.

The fact that 50% of respondents say their media organizations do not handle emergencies related to threats or harassment (see Table 33) is particularly alarming. It shows that media

outlets in the region operate with no protocols, no safety nets, and no crisis management infrastructure. In such an environment, journalists are effectively disposable: left to manage life-threatening risks with no institutional backing.

Trust in law enforcement and government institutions is highly low. 55% of journalists report they do not trust local law enforcement (see Table 34), and 80% believe there is no political will to end impunity for challenges against journalists (Table 29).

This finding is crucial: it reflects a culture of impunity, where perpetrators of violence against journalists are rarely, if ever, held accountable. The state's failure to investigate, prosecute, or even acknowledge these threats reinforces the perception that journalist safety is not a priority.

Together, the findings show a multi-layered environment of repression against journalists in Gwadar and Kech. The security challenges they (journalists) face are not isolated, spontaneous acts of aggression, as they are enabled, [re]produced, and sustained by broader structural and institutional frameworks. These include (violence\*), systemic surveillance, intimidation, and killing by state actors. Additionally, employer censorship and lack of safety infrastructure, weak and absent journalist protection legislation, low trust in law enforcement and the justice system, civic neglect, and under-investment in journalist training or support.

As a result, these conditions have a chilling effect on press freedom, resulting in distorted public narratives, silenced dissent, and a disempowered media landscape in Balochistan. Perhaps importantly, they reflect the planned side-lining of journalism as a profession: central to democracy, accountability, and citizen empowerment.

Despite this, it is notable that some journalists (55%) still believe they can influence positive change (Table 40). This suggests a residual hope and resilience, which must be amplified and protected through institutional reforms, advocacy, legal support, and regional solidarity networks.

## 5.2 Conclusion

This study set out to explore the challenges (security and structural) of ‘working’ journalists in Gwadar and Kech: two of the riskiest districts in Balochistan \*for journalism, through the lens of the Hierarchy of Influences model (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996, 2014). Additionally, adopting a mix method survey, the study reveals a deeply disturbing yet critically important landscape: one where journalism is not merely influenced but actively controlled, reshaped, and often dismantled by structural violence and institutional neglect.

These findings not only validate the utility of the Hierarchy of Influences model in analyzing journalistic production but also reveal the framework’s need for expansion when applied in extreme conflict contexts. The lived experiences of journalists in Gwadar and Kech demonstrate that the hierarchy, while analytically robust, does not always reflect the nonlinear, overlapping, and often chaotic nature of influence in settings of chronic insecurity and political repression.

Journalists in these regions are emotionally and physically fractured individuals navigating fear, moral injury, and a profound sense of abandonment. Many participants expressed feelings of invisibility, both within their professional networks and among the public they serve. The psychological trauma they endure is not merely incidental, but, it is a structural outcome of an environment where there are no mental health services, no peer support systems, and no institutional recognition of the emotional costs of reporting under duress.

In this sense, the individual level of the hierarchy must be expanded to incorporate not only agency and psychological disposition but also trauma, coping mechanisms, and identity politics. The journalist is not just a rational actor making decisions under pressure, however, they are a survivor constantly negotiating the boundaries of self-preservation and professional duty.

At the level of routines, the findings show that the standard values of journalism: e.g. truth, balance, objectivity, and accountability are frequently compromised or deprioritized. These routines are replaced by informal, survival-based practices that prioritize ambiguity, vagueness, and strategic silence.

This directly challenges Western-centric understandings of journalistic routines as relatively stable or institutionally bounded. Instead, in Balochistan, routines are ad hoc, shaped by rumors, informal networks, and unspoken red lines. Reporters often rely on personal contacts rather than verified sources, and editorial decisions are based not on newsworthiness but on risk calculus.

What emerges is an alternative, conflict-sensitive journalism model, one where ethical decision-making is fluid and contingent, built on the logic of ‘survival’ rather than ‘idealism’. This aligns with existing literature by Jamil (2019) and Mushtaq (2022), but goes further in theorizing how routines are not simply adapted in conflict: they are systematically eroded.

The role of media organizations is perhaps the most damning aspect of this research. Journalists consistently reported that their employers, mostly national-level outlets, showed no regard for their safety, welfare, or professional development. Several participants said they worked on training, recognition, or proper accreditation.

The organizational level in the Hierarchy of Influences model often assumes the presence of structures that, while controlling, at least offer some form of support or professional framework. In Gwadar and Kech, however, media organizations operate as extractive institutions, benefiting from local reporting while distancing themselves from local risks.

This echoes Shoemaker and Reese’s notion of institutional imperatives but with a darker twist: the imperative here is not to inform or engage, but to avoid liability and maintain plausible deniability. Journalists are left in a precarious limbo: used for their access but denied the protection of the very institutions they serve.

The institutional level in Balochistan cannot be understood without addressing the militarization of media spaces. Journalists are under the constant watch of security agencies, government, and armed groups. Many reported receiving [guidelines] from security officials or being pressured to publish press releases. Others were warned not to cover certain events or even speak to international organizations.

This form of informal censorship goes beyond gatekeeping. It represents a system of surveillance, intimidation, and narrative control in Balochistan. The institutional pressures faced by journalists in Kech and Gwadar are not peripheral or occasional but\* they are permanent fixtures of the media landscape. This aligns with the work of Shirazi (2017) and Ricchiardi (2012), but also suggests the need for a theoretical update: institutions are not just influencers, they are coercive agents in spaces of militarized governance.

At the societal level, the study found that journalists are not only at risk of physical violence—they are also under constant ideological scrutiny. Reporters are labeled as traitors, state puppets, or enemy sympathizers, depending on what they report or choose not to report. Audiences, especially in polarized regions like Balochistan, project political expectations onto journalists, expecting them to align with either nationalist or separatist narratives. Further, the societal level thus becomes a terrain of ideological warfare, where the journalist's identity is weaponized. This reinforces Shoemaker and Reese's observation that social systems shape journalism, however, in this case, society doesn't just shape—it polices, disciplines, and punishes. Neutrality is seen as betrayal (also in the case with Gwadar and Kech-based journalists) and journalism becomes not a profession, but a political act.

To extend, while the Hierarchy of Influences model remains a valuable lens for mapping multi-level pressures on journalism, this study suggests that in war zones like Balochistan, the model requires conceptual stretching. The hierarchy assumes some degree of journalistic



autonomy and institutional functionality, conditions that are largely absent in the studied districts.

In these contexts, influence is not layered, BUT, it is entangled. Pressures from the state bleed into organizational routines, which in turn affect individual psychology. The hierarchy collapses into a web of control, and the boundaries between levels become blurry, unstable, and sometimes irrelevant. Appendix 1 (page 69) summarizes the main findings as they are interpreted in Shoemaker and Reese's model.

This calls for a modified model, perhaps one that replaces hierarchy with ecology or matrix, to better account for the fluid, coercive, and often overlapping pressures that define journalism in violent peripheries.

The findings also contribute to a growing but still marginal field of Balochistan media studies. Much of the existing literature on Pakistani journalism centers on urban hubs like Islamabad, Lahore, and Karachi. In doing so, it renders peripheral zones invisible both empirically and theoretically.

This study reverses that trend by placing Balochistan at the center of scholarly inquiry. It reveals that understanding journalism in Pakistan or indeed in any 'postcolonial' state requires serious engagement with how geography, ethnicity/nation, and conflict shape media production. In Gwadar and Kech, journalism is not just under pressure but it is actively being redefined through silence, fear, and resistance.

Despite the harsh conditions, it is important to note that journalists in Gwadar and Kech are not merely victims. They are also resisters, negotiators, and strategic actors. Their use of silence, coded language, and selective reporting are not just signs of weakness, they are acts of survival and quiet defiance. Their journalism is not loud, but it is still powerful. It documents the undocumented, signals the unspeakable, and reminds us that in zones of silence, even partial truths matter.

This study calls on future scholars, policymakers, and media institutions to not just protect journalists in conflict but to listen to them, learn from them, and reimagine journalism through their eyes.

## REFERENCES

- Agha, S. (2011). Pakistan: paralysed by violence. *British Journalism Review*, 22(2), 10–13. Retrieved on; August 15, 2024.
- Agha, S., & Demeter, M. (2022). 'No Difference Between Journalism and Suicide': Challenges for Journalists Covering Conflict in Balochistan. *Media, War & Conflict*, 1-20. Retrieved from: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/17506352221101258>. Retrieved on: December 10, 2023.
- Akhavan-Majid, R., & Boudreau, T. (1995). Chain Ownership, Organizational Size, and Editorial Role Perceptions. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 72 (4): 863–873. Retrieved on; January 02, 2025.
- Amnesty International (2014). *Pakistan: Journalists under siege from threats, violence and killings*. Retrieved on; <http://www.amnesty.org/en/for-media/press-releases/pakistan-journalists-undersiege-threats-violence-and-killings-2014-04-30>. Retrieved on; November 17, 2024.
- Amnesty International (2014). *Pakistan: “A bullet has been chosen for you”: Attacks on journalists in Pakistan*. Retrieved from; <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ASA33/005/2014/en>. Retrieved on; November 15, 2024.
- Andresen, K., & Baloch, K. (2020). Reporting in Conflict Zones in Pakistan: Risks and Challenges for Fixers. *Media and Communication*. Retrieved from; <https://uia.brage.unit.no/uiaxmlui/bitstream/handle/11250/2675495/Andresen.pdf?sequence=2>. Retrieved on; May 05, 2024.
- Aslam, R. (2010). Perspectives on conflict resolution and journalistic training. R. Keeble, J. Tulloch, & F. Zollmann. *Peace, Journalism, War and Conflict Resolution*. Peter Lang. Retrieved on; November 17, 2024.
- Baloch, K., & Andresen, K. (2020). Reporting in Conflict Zones in Pakistan: Risks and Challenges for Fixers. *Media and Communication*, 8(1), 37-46. Retrieved on; August 10, 2025.
- Beam, R. A. (2003). Content Differences Between Daily Newspapers with Strong and Weak Market Orientations. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 80 (2): 368–390. Retrieved on; January 06, 2025.
- Belair-Gagnon, V. (2015). *Social Media at BBC News: The Re-Making of Crisis Reporting*. Routledge. Retrieved on; December 30, 2024.
- Brown, M. S. (2014) Big Data, Mining, and Analytics. *Transforming Unstructured Data into Useful Information*. Retrieved from; <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.1201/b1666614/transformingunstructured-data-useful-information-meta-brown>. Retrieved on; December 11, 2023.
- Coulson, D. C. (1994). Impact of Ownership on Newspaper Quality. *Journalism Quarterly*, 71 (2): 403–410. Retrieved on; November 08, 2024.

- Deuze, M. (2005). What is Journalism? Professional Identity and Ideology of Journalists Reconsidered. *Journalism*, 6 (4): 442–464. Retrieved on; December 35, 2024.
- Deuze, M. (2008). The Professional Identity of Journalists in the Context of Convergence Culture. *Observatorio (Obs)*, 2 (4): 103–117. Retrieved on; December 35, 2024.
- Ferrucci, P., & Vos, T. (2017). Who's in, Who's out? Constructing the Identity of Digital Journalists. *Digital Journalism*, 5 (7): 868–883. Retrieved on; January 04, 2025.
- Gandy, O. (1982). *Beyond Agenda-Setting: Information Subsidies and Public Policy*. Ablex. Retrieved on; January 24, 2025.
- Gans, H. J. (1979). *Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek, and Time*. Pantheon Books. Retrieved on; November 04, 2024.
- Graue, C. (2015). Mix method Data Analysis. *International Journal of Sales, Retailing & Marketing*, 4(9), 5-14. Retrieved from; <https://www.circleinternational.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/IJSRM4-9.pdf#page=9>. Retrieved on; May 07, 2024.
- Grare, F (2013). *Balochistan: The State versus the Nation*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Retrieved on; November 07, 2024.
- Hallin, D. C., & Mancini, P. (2011). *Comparing Media Systems Beyond the Western World*. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved on; January 02, 2025.
- Hanitzsch, T., Anikina, M., Berganza, R., Cangoz, I., Coman, M., Hamada, B., Hanusch, F., et al. (2010). Modeling Perceived Influences on Journalism: Evidence from a Cross-National Survey of Journalists. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 87(1), 5–22.
- Hanusch, F., & Tandoc, E. C., Jr. (2019). Comments, Analytics, and Social Media: The Impact of Audience Feedback on Journalists' Market Orientation.” *Journalism*, 20(6): 695–713. Retrieved on; December 02, 2024.
- Herman, E. S., & Chomsky, N. (2010). *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*. Random House. Retrieved on; February 20, 2025.
- Hussain, S. (2015). Conflict Journalism in Pakistan: A Quest for Constructive Reporting. *Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, 23(2). Retrieved from; <https://openurl.ebsco.com/EPDB%3Aagcd%3A3%3A27846707/detailv2?sid=ebsco%3Aplink%3Aascholar&id=ebsco%3Aagcd%3A114579193&crl=f>. Retrieved on; May 06, 2024.
- International Federation of Journalists (Asia-Pacific). (2013). *White Paper on Global Journalism*. Retrieved on; May 02, 2024.
- Jaakkola, M., Hellman, H., Koljonen, K., & Väliverronen, J. (2015). “Liquid Modern Journalism with a Difference: The Changing Professional Ethos of Cultural Journalism.” *Journalism Practice*, 9 (6): 811–828. Retrieved on; January 02, 2025.

- Jamil, S. (2019). Culture of Impunity and Safety of Journalists: Is Safe Journalism a Distant Dream in Pakistan? *World of Media: Journal of Russian Media and Journalism Studies*, (1), 51–66. Retrieved on; November 15, 2024.
- Khan, U. (2016). Reporting is Becoming a Life-Threatening Profession in Pakistan. *Ma'arif Research Journal*. Retrieved on; November 18, 2024.
- Lewis, S. C. (2011). "Journalism Innovation and Participation: An Analysis of the Knight News Challenge." *International Journal of Communication*, 5, 1623–1648. Retrieved on; December 29, 2024.
- Loosen, W., & Schmidt, J.-H. (2012). "(Re-) Discovering the Audience: The Relationship Between Journalism and Audience in Networked Digital Media." *Information, Communication & Society*, 15(6): 867–887. Retrieved on; December 20, 2024.
- Masood, A. (2017). *Threats to Safety of Journalists in Pakistan: Risk Assessment by Journalists at High Risk*. Retrieved on; September 02, 2024.
- McChesney, R. W., & Nichols, J. (2011). *The Death and Life of American Journalism: The Media Revolution That Will Begin the World Again*. Nation Books. Retrieved on; December 20, 2024.
- Mezzer, M., & Sial, S. (2010). *Media and Governance in Pakistan: A Controversial yet Essential Relationship*. Initiative for Peace Building. Retrieved on; November 01, 2024.
- Mudassir, M., & Kermani, S. (2017). *Balochistan Journalists Caught 'Between the Stick and the Gun'*. BBC News. Retrieved from; <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-42086695>. Retrieved on May 01, 2024.
- Nee, R. C. (2014). "Social Responsibility Theory and the Digital Nonprofits: Should the Government Aid Online News Startups?" *Journalism*, 15 (3), 326–343. Retrieved on, May 04, 2024.
- Niaz, B., & Naqvi, S. (2013). Reporting in Conflict Zones; A Case Study of Balochistan. *Balochistan Review*, 81–91. Retrieved on May 01, 2024.
- Norris, P., Kern, M., & Just, M. (2003). *Framing Terrorism: The News Media, The Government, and the Public*, 3–23. Retrieved on; November 08, 2024.
- Patterson, T. E., & Donsbagh, W. (1996). News Decisions: Journalists as Partisan Actors. *Political Communication*, 13 (4), 455–468. Retrieved on; November 05, 2024.
- Prakash, A. (2013). Peace or War Journalism: Case Study of the Balochistan Conflict in Pakistan. *Strategic Analysis*, 633. Retrieved on; May 06, 2024.
- Rehmat A, Alam A. (2014). *Supporting Safety of Journalists in Pakistan: An Assessment based on UNESCO's Journalists' Safety Indicators*. IRADA (Institute of Research, Advocacy and Development) UNESCO Pakistan. Retrieved on; August 29, 2024.

- Reporters Without Borders. (2017). *Press Freedom Index: Ever Darker World Map*. Retrieved from; <https://rsf.org/en/2017-press-freedom-index-ever-darker-world-map>. Retrieved on; March 12, 2024.
- Ryfe, D. M. (2009). Structure, Agency, and Change in an American Newsroom. *Journalism*, 10(5): 665– 683. December 12, 2024.
- Schein, E. H. (2006). *Organizational Culture and Leadership*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Jossey-Bass. November 01, 2024.
- Schudson, M. (2001). The Objectivity Norm in American Journalism.” *Journalism*, 2(2): 149–170. Retrieved on; August 20, 2024.
- Shirazi, S. A. (2017). Reporting Balochistan Conflict: An Analysis of Professional Constraints on Journalists. *Gomal Mass Communication Review*, 4–5. Retrieved on; May 06, 2024.
- Shoemaker, P., & Reese, S. (2014). A Media Sociology for the Networked Public Sphere: The Hierarchy of Influences Model. *Mass Communication and Society*. Retrieved from; <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15205436.2016.1174268>. Retrieved on; May 06, 2024.
- Shoemaker, P. J., & Cohen, A. A. (2012). *News Around the World: Content, Practitioners, and the Public*. Routledge. Retrieved on; February 09, 2025.
- Shoemaker, P. J., & Vos, T. P. (2009). *Gatekeeping Theory*. Routledge. Retrieved on; January 06, 2025.
- Tahir, S. N., & Niaz, B. (2016). Conflict in Balochistan: Freedom of Speech, Challenges and Opportunities. *Pakistan Perspective*, 21(1). Retrieved on; November 17, 2024.
- Tandoc, E. C., Jr. (2014). “Journalism is Twerking? How Web Analytics is Changing the Process of Gatekeeping.” *New Media & Society* 16 (4): 559–575. Retrieved on; August 19, 2024.
- Tandoc, E. C., Jr., & Oh, S. K. (2017). Small Departures, Big Continuities? Norms, Values, and Routines in The Guardian’s Big Data Journalism. *Journalism Studies*, 18(8): 997–1015. Retrieved on; November 05, 2024.
- Tongco, M. (2007). *Purposive Sampling as a Tool for Informant Selection*. Retrieved from; <https://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/5bdc92a7-99fe-4134-aaeb-6d0970562559/content>. Retrieved on; May 06, 2024.
- Tuchman, G. (1978). *Making News: A Study in the Construction of Reality*. Free Press. Retrieved on; October 20, 2024.
- Vos, T. P., & Russell, F. M. (2019). Theorizing Journalism’s Institutional Relationships: An Elaboration of Gatekeeping Theory.” *Journalism Studies*, 20(16): 2331–2348. Retrieved on; May 20, 2024.
- Waqar, S., & Sadiq, N. (2019). Derelict Province: Coverage of Socio-Political Issues of Baluchistan in Selected Pakistani Newspapers. Retrieved on; November 05, 2024.

- Weaver, D. H, et, al. (2007). *The American Journalist in the 21st Century: Us news People at the Dawn of a new Millennium*. Routledge. Retrieved on; January 12, 2025.
- White, D. M. (1950). The “Gate Keeper”: A Case Study in the Selection of News.” *Journalism Quarterly*, 27, 383–390. Retrieved on; February 10, 2025.
- White Paper on Global Journalism. (n.d.) Retrieved from; [https://www.ifj.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/](https://www.ifj.org/fileadmin/user_upload/). Retrieved on; March 12, 2024.
- Winfield, B. H. (Ed.). (2008). *Journalism 1908: Birth of a Profession*. University of Missouri Press. Retrieved on; January 15, 2025.
- Zurutuza, K. (2023). Journalists in Balochistan: Keep Quiet or Die. Inter Press Service. Retrieved from; <https://www.globalissues.org/contact>. Retrieved on; May 02, 2024.

## Appendix 1.

Shoemaker and Reese's main category of influences on journalists	Major findings for Gwadar and Kech-based journalists
<p><b>INDIVIDUAL</b></p> <p>The individual level refers to the biographical, psychological, and sociological characteristics of an individual social actor. For example, a journalist's [age, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, and class status can all influence the news that a person produces because previous life experiences associated with those attributes may color that person's interpretation of an issue or what they choose to prioritize when covering it as a journalist (see rodrigozamith, 2024).</p>	<p><b>FINDINGS</b></p> <p>At the individual level, the findings reflect how personal security concerns, mental health challenges, and violence have led to heightened self-censorship, emotional fatigue, and in some cases, the abandonment of journalism altogether. These challenges echo the literature in the literature review (e.g., Aslam, 2015; Hussain &amp; Redman, 2015), which points to widespread psychological trauma and apathy among journalists reporting from war zones.</p>
<p><b>MEDIA ROUTINE</b></p> <p>The routine level refers to the systematic, repeated practices, forms, and 'rules' that journalistic actors use to do their jobs (<i>ibid</i>).</p>	<p><b>FINDINGS</b></p> <p>The routines level shows how journalistic practices are constrained by the lack of conflict-sensitive training, the absence of safety protocols, and a reliance on informal editorial decisions shaped by fear and survival. As IRADA (2014) and Jamil (2019) noted, the absence of standard operational procedures for war reporting contributes to ad-hoc news production based on what is "safe" rather than what is true.</p>
<p><b>ORGANIZATION LEVEL</b></p> <p>The organizational level refers to the policies, unwritten rules, and economic necessities within media organizations (or whatever other entity a journalist works for). Media outlets must balance commercial concerns with professional ones (<i>ibid</i>).</p>	<p><b>FINDINGS</b></p> <p>At the organizational level in this model, media houses fail to ensure basic protections for their worker(s). Journalists, especially freelancers and stringers, operate without contracts, insurance, or institutional backing. Employers' apathy, as documented</p>



---

### SOCIAL INSTITUTION

The social institutional level refers to the norms, individuals, and organizations that operate outside a given media organization. There is some overlap here with the aforementioned routines level, but this level includes ‘information’ sources, other journalistic organizations, advertisers, and media policy, among other actors (*ibid*).

### SOCIAL SYSTEM

The social system refers to the symbolic frameworks of norms, values, and beliefs that reside at the societal level. This is the most macro level, and it simply reflects the sorts of ideas that are more generally accepted within a broad society (*ibid*).

in the literature (Amnesty International, 2014; Grare, 2013), exacerbates the vulnerability of media workers, especially in districts like Gwadar and Kech where structural support is non-existent.

### FINDINGS

The institutional level is perhaps the most deeply entrenched in Balochistan’s context. Media institutions are influenced, whether, directly or indirectly, by the state’s apparatus and militant groups’ threats. The findings could align with what Shirazi (2017) and Ricchiardi (2012) describe as a dual pressure cooker: journalists are perceived as ‘proxies’ by both sides: subjected to manipulation, censorship, and direct violence when reporting contradicts vested narrative(s). The lack of press freedom and systematic censorship remains a core structural feature.

### FINDINGS

Finally, at the societal level, (larger) ideological, cultural, and geopolitical factors shape journalism in Balochistan. Media workers are routinely caught in nationalistic binaries (pro-federation vs. anti-federation), and societal perceptions heavily influence audience reception and newsroom decisions. These macro-pressures are embedded in what Shoemaker and Reese (1996, 2014), identify as the most deeply rooted level of influence, making any reform efforts exceedingly complex.

---

## Appendix 2.

### Questionnaire

This research study is conducted as part of the requirements for the completion of my MS degree in Media and Communication Studies. You are kindly requested to respond thoughtfully. All information provided will be kept confidential and used solely for academic purposes. Thank you for your valuable time.

**Research Topic:** Challenges for Journalists in Balochistan: A Journalists' Perspective

**Researcher Name:** Abid Ali

**Institute:** International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan

**Department/Faculty:** Media and Communication Studies / Faculty of Social Sciences

Note: Please select only one response per question. Avoid cutting or overwriting, as it may confuse the researcher. Your cooperation is appreciated.

#### Part-1: Demographics

Gender:

Male	Female
------	--------

Age:

20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60
-------	-------	-------	-------

Qualification:

Intermediate	Bachelor	Master
--------------	----------	--------

Form of Organization:

Newspaper	Radio	TV	News Agency
-----------	-------	----	-------------

Job Description:

Reporting	Editing	Camerawork
-----------	---------	------------

Experience:

01-05	06-10	11-15	16 and above
-------	-------	-------	--------------

## Part 2: Perception and Experience

Answer Guide: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly Disagree

Questions	1	2	3	4	5
To what extent do you cover political issues? is this sentence correct?					
To what extent do you feel insecure while covering political issues?					
To what extent do you believe journalists in Balochistan face security challenges (particularly in Gwadar and Kech districts)?					
To what extent do security challenges affect your journalism?					
To what extent have you faced direct threats or violence due to your work as a journalist?					
To what extent have you experienced physical injuries while covering political issues?					
To what extent have you needed to go into isolation after receiving threats?					
To what extent do you feel adequately trained to handle threats or risky situations?					
To what extent do you personally adopt safety measures while reporting?					
To what extent do you feel your family is at risk because of your profession?					
To what extent do you face challenges while gathering information?					
To what extent do you believe the lack of security measures impacts your ability to report safely?					
To what extent have you ever had to self-censor your reporting to ensure your safety?					
To what extent do you believe self-censorship impacts the 'quality' of your reporting?					
To what extent do you believe self-censorship impacts the 'accuracy' of your reporting?					
To what extent do you ever receive threats or intimidation from state actors?					
To what extent do you ever receive threats or intimidation from militant organizations?					
To what extent do you ever receive threats or intimidation from religious groups?					
To what extent do you ever receive threats or intimidation from dominant groups?					
To what extent have you been censored by your employer?					
Have you ever been censored by your government?					

To what extent do you believe there is a lack of political will to address the issue of impunity for security issues against journalists in the Gwadar and Kech districts?					
To what extent do you receive any formal training on conflict-sensitive reporting or personal security?					
To what extent do you feel the press associations in Balochistan adequately address journalists' security issues?					
Are you aware of any safety workshops or trainings aimed at journalists in Balochistan?					
To what extent does your organization handle emergencies such as threats or other security issues?					
To what extent do you trust local law enforcement agencies to protect journalists?					
To what extent do you trust the local government to protect journalists?					
To what extent do you believe civil society can protect journalists from security risks?					
To what extent do security concerns influence the way you choose stories or topics?					
To what extent do you avoid reporting on specific issues to avoid backlash or danger?					
To what extent does your fear of surveillance or monitoring affect your work?					
To what extent do you think journalists in rural areas face more significant security threats than those in urban centers?					
To what extent do you believe journalists can influence positive change despite the challenges they face?					
To what extent do you believe solidarity among journalists helps mitigate security risks?					
To what extent do you face challenges from state authorities while reporting?					
To what extent do you face pressure from political parties regarding your reporting?					
To what extent do you face pressure from tribal groups regarding your reporting?					
To what extent do you believe your employer/institution provides adequate security support?					
To what extent do you believe the government provides adequate security measures?					

### Appendix 3.

#### سوالنامہ

یہ تحقیقی مطالعہ میرے ایم ایس میڈیا اور کمیونیکیشن اسٹڈیز کی ڈگری کی تکمیل کے لیے ہے۔ آپ سے گزارش ہے کہ جوابات دانشمندی سے دیں کیونکہ یہ معلومات اس مطالعے کے جواز کے لیے استعمال کی جائیں گی اور مکمل رازداری میں رکھی جائیں گی۔ آپ کے قیمتی وقت کا شکریہ۔

تحقیقی عنوان: Challenges for Journalists in Balochistan: A Journalists' Perspective

محقق کا نام: عابد علی

ادارہ: انٹرنیشنل اسلامک یونیورسٹی اسلام آباد، پاکستان

شعبہ: / فیکلٹی: میڈیا اور کمیونیکیشن اسٹڈیز / فیکلٹی آف سوشل سائنس

نوٹ: براہ کرم صرف ایک مناسب جواب پر نشان لگائیں۔ کٹائی یا اوور رائٹنگ سے غلط فہمی پیدا ہو سکتی ہے۔ تعاون کا شکریہ۔

#### حصہ اول: عمومی معلومات

صنف	مرد، عورت
عمر	20-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-above
تعلیمی قابلیت	انٹر میڈیٹ، بیچلر، ماسٹر
تنظیم کی نوعیت	اخبار، ریڈیو، ٹی وی، نیوز ایجنسی
کام کی نوعیت	رپورٹنگ، ایڈیٹنگ، کیمرا ورک
تجربہ	01-05 سال 6-10 سال 11-15 سال 16 سال سے زائد

#### حصہ دوم: سوالات

جواب دینے کا طریقہ = 1: سخت اتفاق، = 2 اتفاق، = 3 غیر جانبدار، = 4 اختلاف، = 5 سخت اختلاف

سوال	1	2	3	4	5
کیا آپ سیاسی مسائل کی رپورٹنگ کرتے ہیں؟					
کیا آپ کو سیاسی مسائل کی رپورٹنگ کرتے ہوئے غیر محفوظ محسوس ہوتا ہے؟					
کیا آپ سمجھتے ہیں کہ بلوچستان) خاص طور پر گوادر اور کچھ اضلاع (میں صحافیوں کو سکیورٹی مسائل کا سامنا ہے؟					
کیا سکیورٹی چیلنجز آپ کی صحافت کو متاثر کرتے ہیں؟					
کیا آپ کو صحافتی کام کی وجہ سے براہ راست دھمکیوں یا تشدد کا سامنا ہوا ہے؟					
کیا آپ کو کبھی سیاسی مسائل کی رپورٹنگ کرتے ہوئے جسمانی چوٹیں آئیں؟					
کیا آپ کو کبھی دھمکیاں ملنے کے بعد تنہائی اختیار کرنا پڑی؟					
کیا آپ کو خطرات یا خطرناک صورتحال سے نمٹنے کی تربیت حاصل ہے؟					
کیا آپ ذاتی طور پر رپورٹنگ کے دوران حفاظتی اقدامات اختیار کرتے ہیں؟					
کیا آپ کو اپنے پیشے کی وجہ سے اپنے خاندان کے لیے خطرہ محسوس ہوتا ہے؟					
کیا آپ کو معلومات اکٹھا کرنے میں چیلنجز کا سامنا ہوتا ہے؟					
کیا آپ سمجھتے ہیں کہ حفاظتی اقدامات کی کمی آپ کی رپورٹنگ کی صلاحیت کو متاثر کرتی ہے؟					
کیا آپ نے کبھی اپنی حفاظت کے لیے خود کو سنسر کیا؟					

					کیا آپ سمجھتے ہیں کہ خود سنسنگ آپ کی رپورٹنگ کے معیار پر اثر انداز ہوتی ہے؟
					کیا آپ سمجھتے ہیں کہ خود سنسنگ رپورٹنگ کی درستگی پر اثر ڈالتی ہے؟
					کیا آپ کو کبھی ریاستی اداروں کی طرف سے دھمکیاں یا دباؤ ملا؟
					کیا آپ کو کبھی عسکریت پسند تنظیموں سے دھمکیاں ملیں؟
					کیا آپ کو کبھی مذہبی گروہوں سے دھمکیاں ملیں؟
					کیا آپ کو کبھی غالب سماجی گروہوں سے دباؤ یا دھمکیاں ملیں؟
					کیا آپ کو کبھی اپنے ادارے کی طرف سے سنسنگ کیا گیا؟
					کیا آپ کو کبھی حکومت کی طرف سے سنسنگ کیا گیا؟
					کیا آپ سمجھتے ہیں کہ گوادری اور کیچ اضلاع میں صحافیوں کے خلاف سکیورٹی مسائل پر سزا نہ ہونے کی وجہ سیاسی عزم کی کمی ہے؟
					کیا آپ کو تنازعات کے حساس رپورٹنگ یا ذاتی تحفظ کی کوئی رسمی تربیت ملی ہے؟
					کیا آپ سمجھتے ہیں کہ بلوچستان میں صحافتی تنظیمیں سکیورٹی کے مسائل کو مؤثر طریقے سے حل کرتی ہیں؟
					کیا آپ بلوچستان میں صحافیوں کے لیے کسی حفاظتی ورکشاپ یا تربیت سے آگاہ ہیں؟
					کیا آپ کا ادارہ ہنگامی صورتحال جیسے دھمکیوں یا دیگر سکیورٹی مسائل سے نمٹنے کے لیے تیار ہے؟
					کیا آپ مقامی قانون نافذ کرنے والے اداروں پر صحافیوں کی حفاظت کے لیے اعتماد رکھتے ہیں؟
					کیا آپ مقامی حکومت پر صحافیوں کی حفاظت کے لیے اعتماد رکھتے ہیں؟
					کیا آپ سمجھتے ہیں کہ سول سوسائٹی صحافیوں کو سکیورٹی خطرات سے بچا سکتی ہے؟
					کیا سکیورٹی خدشات آپ کے موضوعات یا خبروں کے انتخاب کو متاثر کرتے ہیں؟
					کیا آپ بعض مسائل پر رپورٹنگ سے صرف اس لیے گریز کرتے ہیں کہ کہیں خطرہ نہ ہو؟
					کیا نگرانی یا مانیٹرنگ کا خوف آپ کے کام کو متاثر کرتا ہے؟
					کیا آپ سمجھتے ہیں کہ دیہی علاقوں کے صحافیوں کو شہری علاقوں کے مقابلے میں زیادہ سکیورٹی خطرات کا سامنا ہوتا ہے؟
					کیا آپ سمجھتے ہیں کہ صحافی چیلنجز کے باوجود مثبت تبدیلی لاسکتے ہیں؟
					کیا آپ سمجھتے ہیں کہ صحافیوں میں یکجہتی سکیورٹی خطرات کو کم کرنے میں مددگار ہے؟
					کیا آپ کو رپورٹنگ کے دوران ریاستی حکام سے چیلنجز کا سامنا ہوتا ہے؟
					کیا آپ کو سیاسی جماعتوں کی طرف سے رپورٹنگ پر دباؤ کا سامنا ہوتا ہے؟
					کیا آپ کو قبائلی گروہوں کی طرف سے رپورٹنگ پر دباؤ کا سامنا ہوتا ہے؟
					کیا آپ سمجھتے ہیں کہ آپ کا ادارہ آپ کو مناسب سکیورٹی سپورٹ فراہم کرتا ہے؟
					کیا آپ سمجھتے ہیں کہ حکومت مناسب سکیورٹی اقدامات فراہم کرتی ہے؟