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## MS THESIS

### CHALLENGES FACED BY JOURNALISTS FROM SOUTHERN KP: A JOURNALIST'S PERSPECTIVE



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2025

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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CONTENTS	Page
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	iii
<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION</b>	1
1.1    Overview of Study	1
1.2    War on Terror and Journalism	1
1.3    Research Problem	5
1.4    Research Objectives	6
1.5    Research Questions	6
1.6    Significance of the study	7
<b>CHAPTER 02: LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	8
2.1    Overview	8
2.2    Terrorism and Its Impact on Society	8
2.3    Journalism in Conflict Zone	9
2.4    Effects of Terrorism on Journalists	11
2.5    Theoretical Concepts	17
2.5.1  Hierarchical Influences Model	17
2.5.2  Social Systems	18
2.5.3  Institutions of Society	19
2.5.4  Media Organization	19
2.5.5  Regular Activities	20
2.5.6  Individuals	20
2.6  Research Gap	20
<b>CHAPTER: 03 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b>	22
3.1    Overview of the Chapter	22
3.2    Research Method	22
3.3    Data Collection	23
3.3.1  Population of the Data	23

3.3.2 Sample	23
3.3.3 Sampling Technique	24
3.4 Conceptualization and Operationalization of Variables	24
3.5 Research Instrument	28
<b>CHAPTER: 04 DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION</b>	31
4.1 Overview	31
4.1.1 Objectives of the Study	32
4.1.2 Research Questions	32
4.2 Demographic Profile of Respondents	33
4.3 Analysis of the Data	35
4.3.1 Economic Challenges	36
4.3.2 Social Challenges	41
4.3.3 Psychological Challenges	47
4.4 Discussion	54
<b>CHAPTER: 05 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	65
5.1 Overall Summary	65
5.2 Conclusion	66
5.3 Suggestions	67
5.4 Recommendations for Future Research	68
<b>REFRENCES</b>	70

## ABSTRACT

This study explores the multifaceted impacts of terrorism on journalists operating in conflict-prone areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, particularly in Tank, Kohat, and Karak. Aiming to investigate the economic, social, and psychological challenges faced by journalists reporting in these volatile regions, the research adopts a quantitative methodology involving 200 respondents from various media outlets. Data was collected through structured questionnaires using a Likert scale to assess perceptions and experiences related to safety, mental health, job security, and societal pressures. The findings reveal that journalists face acute financial instability, including inadequate pay, lack of insurance, and out-of-pocket expenses, which undermine their professional integrity and lead many to consider leaving the field. Socially, they endure community threats, restricted access to sources due to class biases, and feelings of isolation. Psychologically, respondents report high levels of anxiety, sleep disorders, emotional exhaustion, and symptoms indicative of trauma and depression. These compounded stressors severely impact journalistic motivation, objectivity, and well-being. The study concludes that journalism in conflict zones demands urgent policy interventions, organizational support, and mental health resources to safeguard media professionals. Addressing these challenges is essential not only for the safety of journalists but also for the preservation of independent reporting in regions affected by terrorism.

**Keywords:** Conflict Journalism, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Mental Health, Press Freedom, Terrorism

# CHAPTER NO. 1

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Overview of study

With the backdrop of the global War on Terror that started after the September 11 attacks, it shows how Pakistan, because it's close to Afghanistan, became a key battleground, facing long periods of violence and extremism. The background section walks us through the history of terrorism in the area, starting from the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the 70s to Pakistan teaming up with the U.S. and the rise of militant groups in its tribal parts. (Daredia, K. M. A., Zehra, N., & Rasheed, S. 2013).

The study points out how local journalists find themselves in a tough spot, dealing with threats from militants and security forces while also facing money troubles and mental health issues. The problem statement stresses the need to understand how these journalists are affected socially, economically, and mentally in such dangerous situations. The aim of the research is to dig into the specific challenges—like financial struggles, social obstacles, and psychological stress—that journalists face when reporting on terrorism. This study is important in light of Pakistan's ongoing battle with militancy, filling in gaps in what is already known and being relevant for policymakers, media groups, and security teams. (Allan, S. 2004).

### War on Terror and Journalism

The War on Terror, initiated in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States, has had profound implications for journalists working in conflict regions around the world. One such region significantly affected by this global struggle against terrorism is Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), located in northwestern Pakistan, has been a critical theater in this

war due to its proximity to the Afghanistan border and the historical presence of various militant groups. The terrorism in KP has witnessed a range of developments, from military operations against extremist groups to the spread of extremist ideologies, which have had significant implications for the media landscape. Journalists in this region have played a critical role in documenting these events, shedding light on the challenges and opportunities that have emerged in the wake of this protracted conflict. This research proposal aims to investigate the effects of the Terrorism on journalists based in district Tank, Kohat and Karak. (Ackerman, G. A., & Burnham, M. 2021).

Pakistan is a country that has consistently maintained a prominent position in the backdrop during the Cold War. It has seen several challenges over the past four decades as a result of terrorism and economic crises. Pakistan has always denounced both domestic and international terrorism. Following the events of September 11, 2001, Pakistan became an active player in the global war on terror, aligning itself with the US in Afghanistan and the tribal regions of Pakistan. Pakistani territory became the focal point for terrorism and insurgencies as a result of this partnership. (Karnik, S., & Kanekar, A. 2014)

An examination of historical records reveals that the emergence of terrorism in Pakistan can be traced back to the 1970s. When the USSR sought to get access to hot water, it invaded in Afghanistan. The Soviet Union attempted to acquire control over Afghanistan and capture the Gulf Countries. At that time, the Afghan War commenced, pushing two major global powers, namely the Soviet Union and the United States, against one other. In the 1980s, the Soviet Union's interference in Afghanistan necessitated the deployment of extreme proxies to counter the godless communists. Officials of the US government and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) allocated substantial financial resources and arsenals towards countering the Soviet Union. The Afghan

Mujahedeen, who received training from Pakistan and received funding from Western countries and Saudi Arabia, developed a strong relationship with one another. In response, the United States provided backing to all Arab nations. Islamic fanatics hailing from various regions throughout the globe were gathered under the pretext of the holy war and thereafter dispatched to Afghanistan. During Zia ul Haq's tenure, Pakistan established deeper ties with the United States through cooperation with the Pakistani intelligence service and the CIA. (Hussain, S., Siraj, S. A., & Mahmood, T. 2021).

In response to the Soviet Union, the United States provided Pakistan financial aid amounting to \$3.2 billion. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, it retreated. In similar fashion, the United States withdrew from Afghanistan leaving behind Mujahidin. During that period, Pakistan formed a coalition with the Mujahidin, with the objective of engaging in combat against Delhi inside IOK. Certain individuals affiliated with religious groups subsequently align themselves with Al- Qaeda and the Taliban movement. Their skills in Gorilla Wars was well developed. These factions exploited the absence of law enforcement, fragmented into distinct factions and initiated acts of abduction, oppression, and deliberate killings. The Taliban assumed control in Afghanistan following the Soviet Union's exit. However, the conflict was not yet resolved since over thirty factions remained engaged in combat. The United States sought to exert control over the oil pipeline, however failed to address the underlying issues in Afghanistan. (Ahsan Bhatti, M., & Ab Ul Hassan, A. 2014).

During that period, a conflict arose among these many factions in Afghanistan. The Najibullah administration had the challenge of negotiating with local factions in order to establish peace within Afghanistan in 1992. Subsequently, Gulbaddin Hekmatyar established the new administration led by Hezb-e-Islami. The Taliban administration emerged as a political entity in

1994. Following their capture of Kabul in September 1996, they gained control over vast territories in Afghanistan. Subsequently, with the events of 9/11, the United States revised its approach to international ties. Pakistan held sole diplomatic relations with the Taliban administration. Islamabad felt forced to ally itself with the United States as a result of the pressure exerted by the US, since Pakistan was concerned about potential economic and military repercussions. General Pervez Musharraf served as the president of Pakistan during that period. Pakistan, as a key partner, provided logistical support and granted the United States access to its airspace. Pakistan incurs significant costs in order to provide assistance to the global community. The insurgency in Pakistan initiated a wave of terror in the country, as the political supporters of the Taliban and individuals residing in the tribal region rose against the Pakistani armed forces. (Ahmed, M. B. 2010)

Following the decline of Taliban hegemony in Afghanistan, the group relocated to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan. Subsequently, several foreign fighters and sympathizers of the Taliban joined their ranks. Following the establishment of grassroots support, they initiated an offensive on the urban centers of Pakistan. Soon Pakistan Army unleashed hostilities in the ungoverned tribal regions. Operation Rah-e-Nijat commenced in 2009 in South Waziristan (Dawn, 16 June 2014). In this operation, around a thousand individuals lost their lives. According to Major General Asad Ullah Khan, the Commander of Operation, a total of 1198 terrorists have been eliminated and 356 terrorists have sustained injuries. In the Swat Valley, militants have assumed power and announced the implementation of Sharia law in all divisions of Malakand. Operation Rahe-e-Rast was launched by the Pakistani army in May 2009 (The Express Tribune, 15 June 2014).

The Pakistan army successfully seized control of the whole region and eliminated the last militants who had crossed the valley from Afghanistan. A peace accord was reached between Naik

Muhammad, the head of the militants, and the Pakistan army in the northern region. In Waziristan, a US drone attack resulted in the death of Naik Muhammad, leading to the suspension of the peace pact and the initiation of militant attacks over the whole country. In June 2015, the Pakistan army initiated Operation Zarb-e-Azab to combat the terrorists in North Waziristan. Following the assault on an army public school, this operation transforms into a conflict against militants. The Pakistani army annihilated all the secure refuges of the militants. The Pakistan Army initiated a nationwide operation called Raddul Fasaad on the 22nd of February 2017. The operation triggered a total of six explosions. Approximately one hundred individuals lost their lives in different places. On February 16, 2017, a tragic incident occurred in Sindh Province, including a suicide bomb assault at the holy site of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar. (Agha, S., & Demeter, M. (2023).

According to a report by The Nation on February 17, 2017, a total of 76 individuals lost their lives and over 250 sustained injuries. A further act of terrorism occurred, resulting in a minimum of nine fatalities and 37 injuries during a terrorist attack at the Department of Agriculture Training Institution (ATI) in Peshawar. According to SSP Operations Sajjad Khan, during his statement to the media, he mentioned that the individuals responsible for the attack, were wearing suicide jackets and burqas, entered the property using a rickshaw (The Nation, December 1, 2017).

## **Research Problem**

Agha and Demeter (2023) has given in their study that journalism in conflict zones in Pakistan is such a difficult task. Journalists working in conflict zones deal with dangerous situations every day. In Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Pakistan, the ongoing threat of terrorism has seriously affected both their work and personal lives. Media workers in KP constantly face risks from terrorist attacks, threats from different groups, and the trauma of witnessing violence and

destruction. As a result, many reporters experience fear, anxiety, stress, and sleep problems. The uncertain security situation also makes it hard for them to move around, lowers their motivation, and makes them less satisfied with their jobs.

On top of the mental strain, there are economic issues like unstable pay, job insecurity, and a lack of insurance, which only add to their struggles. Socially, journalists can feel alone or face stigma, making things even tougher. There's not much research on how deeply these issues affect reporters in KP, where terrorism is common. This study aims to look into the psychological, economic, and social impacts of terrorism on journalists in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. Understanding these matters is crucial for creating better support systems to protect journalists and help keep independent journalism alive in these tough areas.

## **Research Objectives**

This study has worked on the following objectives:

- To know about the economic challenges faced by journalists during the coverage of terrorism in the selected area (Tank, Kohat and Karak).
- To know about the social obstacles that arises during professional duties of journalists in Tank, Kohat and Karak.
- To identified the psychological impacts of terrorism on journalists of Tank, Kohat and Karak.

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions are set for this study:

- What are the major economic challenges faced by journalists during the coverage of terrorism in the selected areas (Tank, Kohat and Karak)?

- What is the nature of social obstacles journalists face during their work in the selected areas?
- What are the psychological impacts of terrorism on journalists in the selected areas?

## **Significance of the Study**

This research is important in understanding Pakistan's struggle with terrorism, especially in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP), which has seen a lot of violent incidents. This area is tough for journalists who risk their safety to keep the public informed. The study looks at the deep effects of terrorism on journalists in terms of their work, social lives, mental health, and finances. Journalists in KP not only cover traumatic events, but they also face threats, leading to fear, stress, job worries, and a drop in motivation. By looking closely at the experiences of these journalists, the study aims to give a clear picture of the challenges they face and how they cope with them. This research will provide valuable insights into how terrorism affects the media and press freedom in conflict areas. It will also be useful for policymakers, media groups, and human rights advocates to create better strategies for keeping journalists safe and supported. In addition, the findings can help in developing training and support systems that give journalists the skills they need to handle reporting in dangerous situations while staying true to their work and well-being.

## CHAPTER NO. 2

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Overview

The rise of terrorism in Pakistan, especially in the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa area, has really changed the media scene and put journalists' safety at risk. This chapter looks at studies and research that help us understand how terrorism affects journalists socially, economically, and psychologically. Since journalists have a key role in reporting conflicts and shaping what people think, it's important to investigate how living in a violent environment impacts their lives at work and at home.

The literature review covers both global and local research on the challenges journalists face in conflict zones and what it means for freedom of the press and their mental health. There's a particular focus on issues in South Asia and Pakistan, where press freedom is getting worse due to political unrest and threats from militants. Previous research on the emotional stress and burnout experienced by war reporters and local journalists serves as the basis for this study. The chapter also points out a lack of research about journalists in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, showing the need for more focused studies on their experiences in regions affected by terrorism.

#### 2.2 Terrorism and Its Impact on Society

The research on terrorism has been looked at for three main reasons: to get a clear view of what it's all about, to see how it's changed over time, and to point out some areas that still need more attention. There are now over 18,000 studies on this topic. Generally, terrorism research can be split into four main areas: (1) political, ideological, and criminal viewpoints; (2) economic aspects; (3) psychological effects; and (4) emergency response plans. This field has been shaped a lot by real-life political events. Notably, there were two big spikes in research activity, with a

major increase after September 11, when a lot of work focused on the effects and fallout from the attacks. Since around 2010, though, interest in this area has started to drop off (Haghani et al., 2022).

Ackerman and Burnham (2021) create a clear way to understand ideology in terrorism studies by coming up with a new definition of terrorist ideology based on basic principles. This new definition makes sense, is based on solid theory, and fits nicely with other ways of looking at ideology. By providing this clarity, the article helps set the stage for looking at terrorist ideology in a methodical and unbiased way. This approach allows scholars to dig deeper into important questions, like what parts of an ideology are most likely to lead to violent actions, which can help improve the study of terrorism.

It is revealed in a study that terrorism aims to create, distress helplessness, anger, desire for revenge and dread in the public eye to gain a few objectives. These dread assaults cause physical as well as have numerous mental detriments that lead to long-term disorder even passing. Post traumatic disorder impact has long term mental turmoil (Karnik, Kanekar, A., & S., 2014).

### **2.3 Journalism in Conflict Zones**

The study of Hussain et al. (201) looks at how media plays a role in both stirring up and possibly calming conflicts in Pakistan. It combines ideas from peace studies with the current state of journalism in the country to propose a new way to assess conflict journalism based on whether it escalates or calms things down. The research centers around coverage from two well-known TV channels, PTV and Geo News, focusing on seven major conflicts. The results back up the proposed model, showing that as conflicts heat up, the media tends to ramp up the drama in their coverage. Channels that lean towards patriotic and elite views often report in a more sensational way compared to those offering more independent journalism. Still, the study found some examples of

peace-centered reporting amid all the escalation. To promote this type of journalism in Pakistan and similar places, it is important to understand the local conflict dynamics and media landscape. Using Western peace journalism frameworks in non-Western settings might not always work or be relevant.

Moreover, another study looks at the daily work of local journalists in Swat, Pakistan, an area deeply affected by ongoing conflict linked to the fight against the Taliban. It explores the tough situations these journalists encounter while trying to report on the violence and destruction around them, especially in the context of the larger U.S.-led war on terror. Based on detailed interviews with journalists in Swat and nearby areas, this research reveals the mental and professional challenges they face while covering the turmoil of war (Ullah et al., 2023). Using Pierre Bourdieu's Field Theory, the paper focuses on ideas like 'capital,' 'habitus,' and 'doxa' to show how journalists operate within the complicated social environment of the region. It highlights how their work connects to the struggles of the community and how they manage their roles amidst personal and professional challenges. The study shows that even though local journalists have strong cultural and social ties, they often had to relax their core values like neutrality and objectivity due to the intense pressures and trauma of reporting in such a conflict-heavy area.

Studies conducted by communication researchers in several countries have shown that journalists face significant levels of stress when carrying out their duties in areas affected by war. A study undertaken in three prominent urban centers of Pakistan, including Lahore, Rawalpindi, and Peshawar, has uncovered the underlying causes. Research has been undertaken to investigate the effects of terrorism on journalists in the cities of Lahore, Peshawar, and Rawalpindi. (Tufail, 2010).

## 2.4 Effects of Terrorism on Journalists

Research demonstrates that persons afflicted with mental illness suffer from a multitude of medical conditions, such as hypertension, asthma, ulcers, and various mental disorders. A significant number of young adults suffer from depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The prevalence of post- traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among suicide victims is particularly significant. In certain situations, grief can transform into fury, which can also lead many young individuals to commit suicide. Terrorism has had a significant impact on several journalists over the past few decades, leaving no media professional immune to its detrimental consequences. Regrettably, journalists in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have consistently faced acts of terrorism and had direct personal knowledge of the situation. Individuals who experience psychological oppression often exhibit heightened levels of dejection and fury as secondary consequences. The duration of these symptoms can be prolonged, perhaps leading to lifelong posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Ahmed & M., 2010).

Hamblen conducted a nationwide investigation within a span of four to five days following the effect of the September 2001 attack and discovered that journalists who report on terrorism experience feelings of anxiety, stress, and detachment from their profession. The media assumes a significant role in a harrowing occurrence. The media plays a crucial role in disseminating essential information (Hamblen & J., 2006).

Schuster conducted a telephone survey following the terrorist attack that occurred in September 2011, which lasted for three to five days. The study employed random digit dialing to gather data from a diverse and nationwide group of 560 American kids. The findings of the study indicated that persons who are not physically present in areas affected by terrorism may nevertheless experience heightened levels of stress. The results indicate that 45% of individuals

appreciate signs of stress on a scale of one to five. The prevalence of trauma was 91%. 84% of respondents indicate that their along with other children engage in conversations lasting one hour or more over this issue. 34% reduced their children's television viewing. 30% of the youngsters experience many sources of stress, while 47% of the parents express concern about their children. Following the events of 9/11, the whole American population, including their children, experienced significant stress (Schuster, et al., 2001).

Maria Nilsson examines the manner in which news organizations perceive crises within a digital media landscape influenced by citizen observation and the extensive dissemination of images on social media platforms. This study draws upon theoretical frameworks and existing research on citizen photojournalism and witnessing. It investigates the role of visual citizen contributions, the level of explicitness in visual coverage, and the influence of proximity on the portrayal of crises. According to the results, the author views journalism's civic reaction as a tactic to establish credibility and ethics in a time when the role of journalists as gatekeepers is being questioned (Nilsson, 2020).

A research undertaken by Kari Andén-Papadopoulos and his team members examines the influence of citizen witnessing on the professional ideology of journalists. The study included interviews with journalists from prominent news organizations in Finland and Sweden. The use of citizen-generated images and films in mainstream news coverage is regarded as a possible catalyst for altering professional perceptions of journalism in relation to crisis situations. Three interpretive repertoires were discovered from the perspectives of journalists: resistance, surrender, and regeneration. Our findings suggest a reconsideration of the established standards and responsibilities of journalists (Andén-Papadopoulos, 2013).

Reporting War examines the ethical responsibilities of journalists in the midst of wartime hostilities. The portrayal of worldwide crises, particularly the one in Palestine, by the mainstream press is progressively generating public criticism, necessitating immediate deliberation. Each of the participants in this book presents a unique perspective that questions commonly held beliefs regarding conflict reporting. This study identifies and critiques a range of serious concerns related to wars in recent years, with a particular focus on their potential implications for enhancing journalism in the present day. Considerable emphasis is placed on contemporary transformations in journalism formats and methodologies, and their influence on the visual representation of warfare and the topics under consideration (Allan & Stuart, 2004).

Distant Suffering, originally published in 1999, explores the ethical and political consequences for an observer of the remote pain experienced by others as portrayed in the media. What are the ethically permissible reactions to witnessing pain on television, particularly when the spectator has the ability to actively influence the conditions under which the suffering occurs? Luc Boltanski contends that observers have the ability to actively engage themselves and others by articulating their observations and the impact they have had on them. Adam Smith explores three rhetorical 'themes' in his moral theory to analyze how the audience responds to suffering: denunciation, emotion, and the aesthetic subject. The book culminates by examining a "crisis of pity" in the context of contemporary manifestations of humanitarianism. A potential solution to this dilemma is proposed, which entails prioritizing and concentrating on current distress (Boltanski, 1999).

Helen Caple examines the use of pictures in newspapers and online news, scrutinizing the process of constructing meanings in images and investigating the connections between text and

image. This is demonstrated using genuine news articles from both print and online news sources (Caple, 2013).

Marina Vujnovic research investigates the political and economic dimensions of citizen engagement in online media, specifically focusing on user-generated content (UGC), across ten Western democracies. The study is conducted by journalists who are actively involved in the creation and analysis of such material. Based on interviews conducted with over 60 journalists, we investigate their perceived economic incentives for a continuous reevaluation of conventional journalistic responsibilities, while user-generated content (UGC) gains prominence on news websites (Vujnovic, 2010 ).

Killian J. McCarthy revealed the three significant studies conducted in 1976, 1986, and 1996 among professional journalists indicated that the overwhelming majority perceive themselves as impartial, unbiased, and equitable observers, whose primary function is to disseminate information. To what extent does the media exhibit neutrality in its direction and influence on market behavior? This research synthesizes many literatures to propose that the media's selection of events to report, the extent and frequency of reporting, and the descriptive tone employed in their coverage all influence the economy in a non-neutral manner (McCarthy, 2014).

Han Soo Lee revealed that the ideological tilt of media at the aggregate level is influenced by external variables, including national political and economic realities. In order to analyze this argument, the concept of "macro media bias" is assessed on a quarterly basis by evaluating the comparative magnitude of liberal and conservative news articles pertaining to domestic matters spanning the years 1958 to 2004. This study use ARIMA models to demonstrate that the news media exhibits a tendency to respond unfavorably to government expenditure. Furthermore,

economic factors, such as unemployment and inflation, have a crucial role in elucidating fluctuations in the proportion of liberal and conservative news articles (Lee, 2013 ).

Verger, Dab, Abenham, Rouillon, Voinet, Lamping, and Loze undertook a study to determine the effect of PTSD on the victims of the 1995–1996 France bombings, which resulted in the deaths of 12 people and the injuries of over 200 others. The long-term incidence of PTSD over the years following terrorist acts has not been thoroughly studied. It was assumed that out of the 196 participants, 68% of them participated in this test. Findings indicate that 51% of people have hearing problems as a result of terrorism, and these effects are long-lasting. However, after 2.6 years, this analysis suggests that people who are directly impacted have greater mental effects, especially women (Verger, et al., 2004).

The socio-psychological effects of war on media professionals in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and tribal regions are examined in a collaborative research conducted by Rooh ul Amin Khan and Zahid Yousaf. The researchers saw observable effects on journalists who were reporting from regions affected by war. Individuals encounter a multitude of obstacles, including governmental and organisational scrutiny, safety risks, and restrictions on their ability to freely access specialised domains and news outlets. This study reveals several significant conclusions, including limited benefits and privileges, inadequate facilities for journalists to carry out their professional responsibilities, and stringent requirements imposed on local journalists (Khan & Zahid , 2017).

Hafez asserts that the authentic portrayals of brutality have a profound impact on the audience, especially young individuals who are directly affected by the Peshawar incident. Given the ongoing conflict in Pakistan. Aggressors and extremists exist both domestically and internationally. The role of local media is crucial in raising awareness. Undoubtedly, it is a challenging undertaking. Savagery is perceived as a means for individuals to evade it. However,

this assertion is not accurate. Contrary to expectations, the authentic depiction of violence on television has a profound effect on the mental well-being of viewers (Erum & P, 2015).

A research study was conducted with a focus on the adult population residing in Karachi. A total of 400 individuals were chosen, with 60% being male and 40% being female. The participants were aged between 26 and 35 years. The findings indicate that 68.3% of individuals rely on television as their primary source for news consumption.

According to the findings, a significant proportion of participants, specifically 41.5% (28.8%), experienced enduring impacts following exposure to news of violence. 43.3 percent of the population reported experiencing tension when hearing news on television. 20.8 % percent of the parents reported that they adopt measures to restrict their children's access to news media. The findings of this study indicate that the exposure to news channels has a significant impact on stress levels. The consumption of breaking news depicting acts of violence has a detrimental impact on the emotional well-being of individuals. High levels of anxiety not only impact an individual's life but also exacerbate civic unrest (Daredia, K., Zehra, , & Rasheed , 2013).

A home survey was done by Naeem in Islamabad with the aim of studying and examining the impact of exposure to news of violence on persons. The study utilised the electoral register to identify the residents of Islamabad who were registered for the elections held from January to April 2009. Four hundred respondents were surveyed, and it was determined that post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was present in 29.4 percent of the participants. The prevalence of depression was 47.6%. 45.3% of the respondents experienced genuine stress. Individuals living with their loved ones have a higher prevalence of depression (Naeem, et al., 2012).

A research titled "The Impact of Television on the Mental Health of Viewers" was undertaken by Jahangir and Nawaz. A total of 470 individuals, comprising both males and females,

were recruited from the age range of 18 to 60 years. The researchers employed a survey methodology to gather data from the participants. The findings indicated that the media exhibited a promotion rate of 41% for violent material. Furthermore, the primary detrimental impact of media is its significant contribution to the escalation of stress and tension, accounting for 97% of cases. The media is exerting a detrimental influence on the promotion of violence, therefore impacting the mental well-being of its viewers (Jahangir, F, Nawaz, & Khan, 2014).

In this study, Bhatti and Hassan conducted an analysis on the psychological consequences of television news violence on young individuals. The survey methodology was employed to get data from the participants. The study findings indicate that 59% of viewers experience psychological effects as a result of exposure to violence in TV news. It has been seen by researchers that exposure to violent news on television has had a psychological impact on young individuals. The presence of violence in television news has a profound impact on viewers' behavior, evoking dread and a sense of threat, ultimately leading to depression. Occasionally, individuals get desensitized to violence after viewing it on television news. Occasionally, individuals refrain from viewing television news due to the presence of violence, which adversely affects their emotional state and way of life. Upon witnessing television news violence, viewers have feelings of anxiety and insecurity upon relocating. News information including violence has a direct impact on the psychological state of viewers (Bhatti, M.B. , Hassan, & A, 2014).

## **2.5 Theoretical Concepts**

### **2.5.1 Hierarchical Influences Model:**

The Hierarchy of Influences, sometimes referred to as the Hierarchical Influences Model, is a systematic theoretical framework for mass communication that was first presented by Pamela Shoemaker and Stephen D. Reese. From the macro to the micro levels, it consists of five degrees

of impact on media content: individuals, regular activities, media organizations, social systems, and social institutions. This concept was first presented in their book "Mediating the Message: Theories of Influence on Mass Media Content". The proposal of the framework was prompted by the researchers' perception of an over focus on research pertaining to media processes and consequences. The HOI model assigns the dependent variable in research studies to the content generated by news media, which is impacted by elements placed within the hierarchical framework.

The model, which is viewed from a media sociology standpoint, considers the various influences that impact media simultaneously and proposes how influence at a particular level may interact with that at another. In contrast to the majority of media effects research, which considers media content as an independent variable to examine audience usage and influence, the "Hierarchy of Influences" framework adopts a different approach. It regards media content as the dependent variable and identifies five levels of influences as potential independent variables. In general, the framework offers a means of understanding the interconnections between the media and other cultural, organizational, and institutional entities.

### **2.5.2 Social Systems**

The outermost ring of the model, known as the macro social systems level, encompasses the impacts originating from social systems in their entirety. This level examines the impact of ideological influences on the formation and manipulation of media content. Due to this rationale, it is frequently utilized in the context of cross-national comparative media research.

Journalist working in Pakhtunkhwa province usually work on lower wages as compared to other urban centers of Pakistan. The state machinery that is run on the legacy of modern day predator capitalism had turned them into mere slaves of the dominant elites. Job security for

journalists of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had become a myth. Burning issues like land mines, free speech, political participation, resources theft and de-militarization of pakhtun areas could not become news content as they oppose the capitalist pseudo-democratic ambitions of state agencies. Still, the voices of masses are lost in the abyss of capitalist system. An ambitious journalist will always find himself on the verge of becoming jobless and bankrupt.

### **2.5.3 Institutions of Society**

The concept of social institutional level pertains to the impact exerted by the broader trans-organizational media landscape. This inquiry pertains to the manner in which media organizations amalgamate into bigger institutions, so integrating themselves into broader structured connections that either compete with or rely on one another as influential social institutions. While covering US drone strikes and state military operations in the pakhtun areas; journalists had frequently experienced a strict policy of censorship from their own media organizations. State atrocities during armed conflicts usually go unnoticed due to organizational policies. In such circumstances, media professionals find themselves in a state of dilemma. If they cover the so called collateral damage; they are at a risk of losing their job and hence faced with the economic threat. Ignoring civilian life and infrastructure lose can also put journalists on the receiving end of their societies.

### **2.5.4 Media Organizations**

The distinction between media organization level and routines lies in the later's ability to encompass a broader organizational and occupational context, including organizational policies, occupational duties, and the structural framework of the media company. Journalists usually find themselves at odds with their employer's commitments. The nature of media content should be according to their policies. These media entities on-airs content that aligns with organization narrative.

### **2.5.5 Regular Activities**

At the routines level, communicators are influenced by three sources of routines that both limit and facilitate their work process: audiences, organizations, and content suppliers. Journalists have formulated established routines based on a perpetual set of rules in order to effectively address prevalent circumstances. Daily socialization of journalists has a greater psychological impact on content production.

### **2.5.6 Individuals**

The central position of the model is occupied by the micro individual level. At this level, the qualities of individual communicators, encompassing both personal and professional aspects, exert an impact on media content. The media content is indirectly influenced by an individual's inherent traits, including gender, color, religion affiliation, and political background. These factors have a part in creating personal attitudes and beliefs, such as ethical ideals, as well as professional positions and educational experiences. Media professional's attitudes and socialization have an impact on content. This communicator-centered approach emphasizes the psychological influences on an individual's job, including personal, professional, and political aspects. Media professionals working in KP had endured a great period of anxiety and stress during their field work. Violence and suicide bombing in Tank, Kohat and Karak had left the pakhtun media fraternity with deep marks of psychological trauma. Most of the times, they find themselves questioning the roots of this violent conflicts taking place on the soil of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. They show resentment over the harsh treatment of his fellow pakhtuns by state authorities.

## **2.6 Research Gap**

The available research on journalism in conflict areas, especially relating to terrorism, gives us a fair amount of insight into what media workers go through. Still, there is a notable lack of

studies focusing on how terrorism specifically affects journalists in places like Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The mix of ongoing conflict, terrorism, and media reporting there presents unique challenges for these professionals, both in their work and mental well-being. While some studies have looked at conflict journalism around the world, few take a close look at how threats from terrorism impact journalists' everyday work, mental health, and professional ethics in Pakistan.

Most of the current research tends to zoom in on broader geopolitical issues or major global events, like what happened after September 11. While those are important topics, they often miss the local effects of terrorism on the media. For instance, there has not been enough focus on the psychological challenges, like trauma and stress, which Pakistani journalists face while working in such dangerous situations. Additionally, studies about journalistic standards in conflict areas often look at how censorship and political pressure affect ethics, but they do not really explore how terrorism-related threats influence how journalists do their jobs. Though some research has touched on concepts like peace journalism, they usually do not consider the specific cultural and social aspects of regions like Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This gap in research points to the need for a better understanding of the real challenges journalists face in these areas, which could help in shaping policies to improve safety and support for media workers in regions affected by terrorism.

## CHAPTER NO. 3

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Overview of the Chapter

This chapter explains how the research was carried out to look into the effects of terrorism on journalists working in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. It covers the study's design, how data was collected, and the sampling methods used. A quantitative approach for the challenges journalists face—like psychological stress, social issues, and economic struggles—in areas hit by terrorism was used. To gather data, the researcher used a questionnaire. It was also made sure to follow ethical guidelines throughout the study, such as getting consent, ensuring anonymity, and keeping everything confidential. This chapter lays out how we approached the research, setting the stage for the study's findings.

#### 3.2 Research Method

This study used quantitative research method to look into how terrorism impacts journalists in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The researcher choose this method because it lets us measure things like the psychological, social, and economic effects on journalists in areas hit by terrorism Tank, Kohat and Karak. This approach helped us collect data that we could analyze to spot trends and patterns in their experiences. To gather this data, the researcher created structured questionnaires. These had scale questions that focused on specific topics like anxiety levels, job satisfaction, social relationships, income stability, and safety at work. This format helped us get consistent answers that were easy to compare. By using this method, the researcher gained a clear understanding of how terrorism affects journalists both at work and in their personal lives. The insights gained can be useful for policymakers, media organizations, and researchers who want to improve safety and wellbeing for journalists in risky areas.

### **3.3 Data Collection**

For this study, the researcher used a structured questionnaire to gather information on how terrorism affects journalists in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. I designed the questionnaire after looking at existing research and divided it into sections, each focusing on different aspects like mental health, workplace safety, social stability, and financial issues. I reached out to journalists working in areas impacted by terrorism, such as Tank, Kohat, and Karak. The respondents included reporters, editors, and media correspondents from both print and electronic media. I collected a total of 200 responses during the fieldwork. Participants filled out the questionnaire themselves, which helped ensure their answers were confidential and honest. I explained the study's purpose and promised that their responses would stay private. I also made sure to follow ethical guidelines, including getting informed consent from everyone involved.

#### **3.3.1 Population of the Data**

Adeniyi (2011) says that “aggregate number of substantial residences of individuals in one land zone, for instance, the number of inhabitants in a nation”. The study area for this research is Tank, Kohat and Karak based journalists of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa who covers the events of terrorism. It is the relevant population for this study.

#### **3.3.2 Sample**

The sample size for this study consists of two hundred journalists from the Tank, Kohat and Karak city of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa who cover terrorism events. The sample size is determined based on the research requirements. In order to obtain accurate and reliable data from the participants, the researcher will select journalists from various media organizations situated in Peshawar. The provincial capital is the heavily targeted city in Pakistan by acts of terrorism. The sample used for this investigation was deemed to be the most appropriate.

### **3.3.3 Sampling Technique**

The two main components of a testing system are probability sampling and non- probability sampling. The probability sampling approach ensures that every population has an equal possibility to be selected. The probability sampling approach encompasses several methods, including Simple Random Sampling, Systematic Sampling, Stratified Sampling, Cluster/Area Sampling, and Multi-stage Sampling. Non-probability sampling does not afford equal opportunity for all members of the population to be selected for inclusion in the research. The non-probability sampling methodology employs the following strategies. The sample techniques employed in this study include purposive sampling, accident/availability sampling, convenience sampling, snowball sampling, and self-selection sampling. In this study researcher used Systematic sampling (Probably sampling method). The researcher chose first the whole population and then divided it into a sample size ( $600 \div 200 = 3$ ).

## **3.4 Conceptualization and Operationalization of Variables**

Conceptualization pertains to the mutually accepted and specific interpretation of the terminology employed in a research investigation. The independent variable in this study is terrorism, whereas the dependent variable will be the impact of terrorism on press reporters. The symptoms commonly associated with this condition include nervousness, tension, anxiety, worry, depression, aggressive attitude, isolation issues sleep problems, insomnia, and cognitive impairment.

### **Tension**

**Formal:** Tension is an unforeseen occurrence. An unforeseen event or circumstance may arise, which might be either advantageous or disadvantageous, resulting in a state of stress.

**Operationalization:** Tension is a term used to describe an unforeseen event, such as an abrupt tragedy or exceptional situation, which can result in either favorable or unfavorable outcomes.

Media journalists are experiencing increased fear as a result of an unforeseeable act of terrorism, mostly owing to the unanticipated nature of this action. There are several symptoms that are commonly related with stress. Chronic, pulsating headache, Symptoms.

### **Mental disorder**

**Formal:** The term "mental disorder" is synonymous with "mental illness." Mental disorders encompass a range of problems that involve alterations in cognition, emotion, behavior, or a combination thereof. **Operationalization:** When journalists report on a terror incident, they see a distressing situation that influences the reporters' thoughts, feelings, and behaviours. These factors contribute to the development of mental disorders. Indications of mental illness encompass a range of symptoms, including persistent feelings of sadness, distress, or irritability, heightened emotional fluctuations, excessive anxiety, and heightened stress and anxiety.

### **Fright**

**Formal:** Fright refers to an intense and abrupt state of terror. In essence, the term "fright" refers to any phenomenon that is peculiar, distressing, or remarkable, hence eliciting an emotional alert or instigating enmity.

**Operationalization:** Media reporters experience constant dread due to the potential occurrence of terrorist events at any given moment and location. Following the fear's negative effects, accelerated heart rate and rapid respiration, tight throat and dry mouth. Hands, legs, lips, and voice all tremble.

### **Insecurity**

**Formal:** Insecurity refers to a feeling of being vulnerable and powerless.

**Operationalization:** Media reporters have a sense of vulnerability and powerlessness during and after acts of terrorism, since over a hundred journalists have lost their lives in Pakistan. Consequently, media reporters consistently feel a state of insecurity. Indicators of insecurity in individuals that exhibit reliving dangers may have diminished levels of assurance, encounter challenges in self-observation, and necessitate a sense of purpose in their lives.

### **Depression**

**Formal:** Depression is a prevalent and authentic medical condition that has a negative impact on one's emotional well-being. Your cognitive processes and behavioral patterns.

**Operationalization:** Media reporters experience sadness, engage in negative thinking, and behave accordingly due to their dread of potential terrorist events. Indications of depression are difficulty focusing, retaining information, and forming judgments. Experiences of remorse, insignificance, and powerlessness. Negativity and despair. Insomnia, sometimes known as early-morning wakefulness or excessive sleep.

### **Anxiety**

**Formal:** Anxiety is the state of feeling anxious or tense, often due to worry of a potential future event. **Operationalization:** Media reporters experienced anxiety as a psychological consequence of terrorism. Constantly have anxiety about the future. Anxiety manifests through emotions such as panic, fear, and unease. Rest problems. Lacking the ability to maintain silence and stillness.

### **Aggressive attitude**

**Formal:** An aggressive attitude refers to a problem that causes harm to others or becomes a persistent problem.

**Operationalization:** Media journalists who report on acts of terrorism often exhibit a hostile demeanor due to several reasons that have impact on their coverage, such as the number of human casualties involved. Seclusion, Rapid Deterioration of Temperance.

### **Separation Anxiety Disorder**

**Formal:** Separation anxiety disorder is characterized by an individual's heightened anxiety in relation to being separated from their home or other individuals.

**Operationalization:** Media reporters experience separation anxiety disorder, which causes them to stay away from their family and loved ones. The symptoms of a separation anxiety disorder include pain in the stomach, a rapid heartbeat, headaches, and difficulty breathing.

### **Social Variables**

#### **Social Class**

**Formal:** A social class is a collection of individuals into one of several hierarchical social classes, the working, middle, and upper classes being the most prevalent.

**Operationalization:** A journalist belonging to a specific class either to a middle class family or elites of the society results in a significant impact on his professional abilities. A person hailing from middle income family would hardly find access to the echelons of power and decision making.

#### **Occupational Mobility**

**Formal:** Occupational mobility is the freedom at which a journalist can switch jobs within the same industry. Economists anticipate strong productivity and growth when worker mobility is high. **Operationalization:** Organizational commitments may come in conflict with the working

nature of a journalist. This phenomenon is quite evident in the case of war journalism where a media professional finds little work space for his abilities. Thus, resulting in alternative options for employment. **Economic variables**

### **Income**

**Formal:** Income is the total sum of cash, assets, and other valuable transactions received over a specific period of time in return for goods or services.

**Operationalization:** journalists working in a conflict zone on minimum wages might think twice before risking his life for his responsibilities. Low income for journalists might lead to unemployment and other career choices.

### **3.5 Research Instrument**

The Likert scale was employed as a technique in the questionnaire to gather responses from the participants. The survey had response options: 1) Strongly agree and 2) Agree. 3) Neutral 4) Disagree. 5) Strongly disagree. The questionnaire used in the research is given below:

**Title: Survey Questionnaire on Challenges Faced by Journalists in Southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

**Instructions:**

Please tick (✓) the option that best represents your opinion for each statement. All responses will remain confidential and will be used only for academic research purposes.

#### **Section A: Demographic Information**

**1.Age:**  20–30  31–40  41–50  51 and above

**2.Gender:**  Male  Female  Other

**3. District of Work:**  Tank  Kohat  Karak

**4. Years of Journalism Experience:**  Less than 1 year  1–3 years  4–7 years  More than 7 years

**5. Type of Media Organization:**  Print  Television  Online  Radio

## Economic Challenges

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. My salary does not justify the risk involved in covering terrorism.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
2. I often fund my own travel and safety gear while reporting in dangerous areas.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
3. I lack insurance or financial protection in case of injury or death during assignments.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
4. Economic insecurity limits my ability to report freely and objectively.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5. I have considered leaving journalism due to insufficient income and job risks.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

## Social Challenges

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6. I face social pressure or threats when reporting on terrorism-related incidents.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
7. My social class limits my access to influential people or official sources.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
8. Community members often discourage me from covering conflict-related stories.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
9. My personal background affects how seriously I am taken as a journalist.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

10. I feel isolated from peers or society due to the nature of my reporting work.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
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## Psychological Challenges

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11. I feel constant anxiety while covering terrorism or conflict related news.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
12. I experience sleep disturbances or insomnia after witnessing violent incidents.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
13. I feel emotionally exhausted or mentally drained after assignments.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
14. I experience fear or panic even when I'm not working.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
15. I have developed symptoms such as aggression, depression, or withdrawal from others.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

## CHAPTER NO. 4

### 4. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Overview

This chapter presents the quantitative analysis of data gathered from 200 journalists working in the southern districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Tank, Kohat, and Karak). The responses were analyzed based on the key variables: economic challenges, social challenges, and psychological impacts. It is grounded in the core objective of the study—to examine the primary effects of terrorism on working journalists in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa across social, economic, and psychological aspects. The experiences and conditions faced by media professionals in Pakistan provided the basis for the analysis conducted. These professionals continue to operate under intense psychological pressure due to unpredictable and life-threatening situations. The findings discussed in this chapter are drawn from the real challenges journalists encounter while commuting, working, and reporting in an insecure environment. Shah et al. (2023) also claim that economic challenges and personal safety is one of the key issues in journalism. Their professional morale and motivation have seen a decline. This analysis further investigates how exposure to terrorist events—including witnessing death and injury, facing threats from multiple sources, and navigating an unstable economic climate—leads to emotional strain. Patterns of fear, anxiety, stress, sleep disturbances, job detachment, and other psychological impacts form the core of this chapter's examination. The findings are structured around descriptive statistics, mean scores, standard deviations, and graphical representations in the light of the below given questions, objectives and research gap.

#### **4.1.1. Objectives of the Study**

- To know about the economic challenges faced by journalists during the coverage of terrorism in the selected area (Tank, Kohat and Karak).
- To know about the social obstacles that arises during professional duties of journalists in Tank, Kohat and Karak.
- To identified the psychological impacts of terrorism on journalists of Tank, Kohat and Karak.

#### **4.1.2. Research Questions**

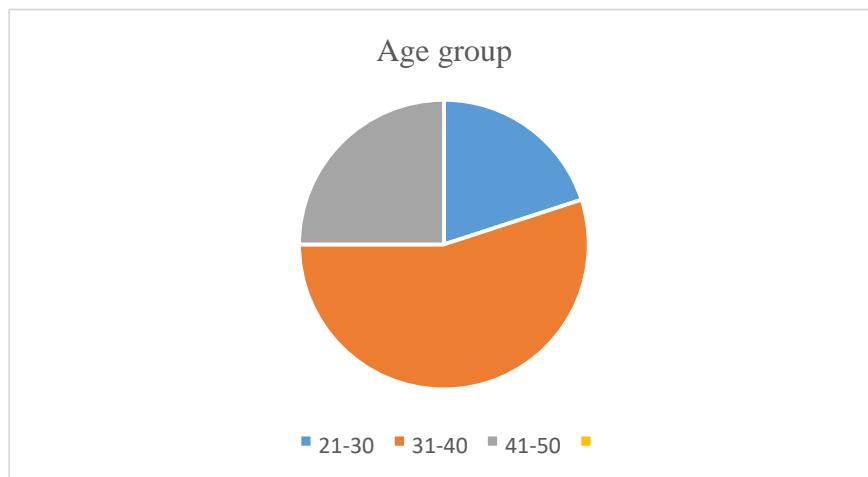
- What are the major economic challenges faced by journalists during the coverage of terrorism in the selected areas (Tank, Kohat and Karak)?
- What is the nature of social obstacles journalists face during their work in the selected areas?
- What are the psychological impacts of terrorism on journalists in the selected areas?

Along with the previous defined objectives of the study and research questions, a systematic questionnaire designed to elicit valuable responses from the working journalists in KhyberPakhtunkhwa was formulated. An overall of 15 well thought out questions were incorporated in the questionnaire, split evenly into the three critical variables: the the diverse social, economic, and psychological consequences of terrorism on journalists. social, economic, and psychological impacts of terrorism. *“A questionnaire is a predetermined set of questions given to a number of respondents. This instrument is good for getting information from many people”* (Mazhar et al, 2021). Discovering these variables was essential because, by doing so, they make it easier to understand the mixed obstacles that capture journalists in conflict territories. The survey

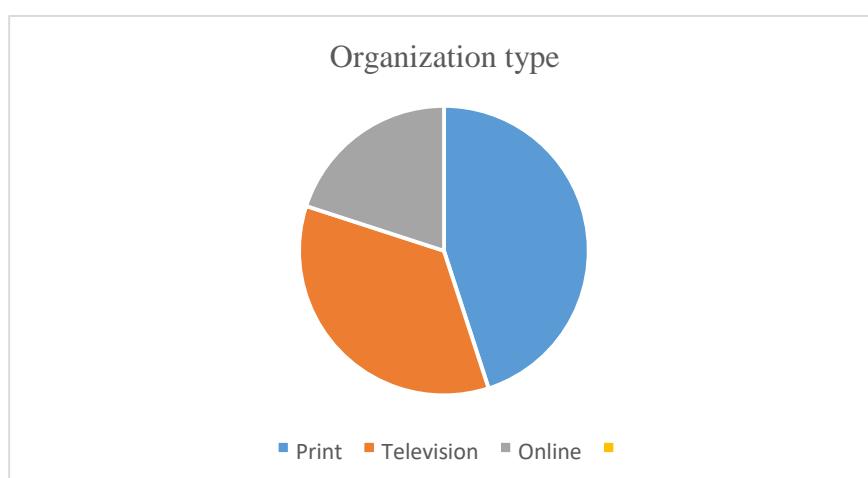
questions aimed at obtaining both immediate and long-term effects of terrorism on journalists' careers and personal lives. Through the use of both physical and digital modes of distribution, the completed questionnaire moved to a wide pool of working journalists for this study. These collected responses became the basis on which the analysis presented here.

## 4.2 Demographic Profile of Respondents

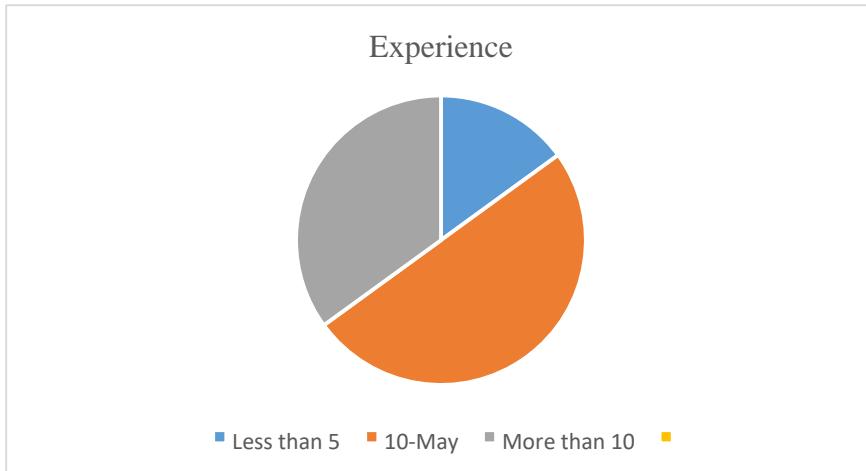
*Figure 1: Age group*



*Figure 2: Organization type*



*Figure 3: Experience*



By the simple analysis of the demographic characteristics of respondents, one can clearly see that significant insight is gained about the profile of the journalists involved. The full set of the 200 respondents (100%) were males, reflecting the underlining gender patterns of the media world of KhyberPakhtunkhwa. The group with the largest representation was that of 31–40 year olds (55%), pointing to the fact that most respondents were mid-career based. Another 25% of the respondents were aged in between 41-50 years, and then 20% were journalists of less than 30 years. Regarding media organization, 45% of the respondents marked themselves as working in print journalism, which is the most popular form of affiliation for the participants. The group 20% belonged to online media while television media had 30% of respondents affiliated to it. The sample indicates that the traditional media formats are still prevalent, but also displays the steady growth of digital journalism in the region. Professionally 50% of the respondents had between 510 years experience working in the field, which thereby indicates a team already experienced and established. Besides, 35 % were in the workforce with a more than 10 year experience in the field, highlighting the bulk of experienced journalists. At just less than a quarter of the respondents

(15%), the survey findings show that there was a relatively limited number of early-career journalists in contact or working in the region's media.

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	200	100%
Age Group	21–30	40	20%
	31–40	110	55%
	41–50	50	25%
Organization Type	Print Media	90	45%
	Television Media	70	35%
	Online Media	40	20%
Experience (Years)	Less than 5	30	15%
	5–10	100	50%
	More than 10	70	35%

**Table 4.1: Demographic Profile of Respondents**

### 4.3 Analysis of the Data

The analysis below looks at the diverse problems faced by journalists reporting on terrorism while focusing on three major factors, such as economic, social, and psychological stressors. Investigation into these reveals how fiscal pain, public interest, and mental health form the day-to-day realities for journalists. This division of the information throws light on the complex network of issues that journalists deal with while working on journalism stories about terrorism. Economic considerations involve such problems as low pay, lack of adequate insurance, and individual out-pocket expenses for reporting purposes which left many in economic distress and

dissatisfaction in the workplace. Journalists also face social barriers like public criticism and class divide and obstacles to official meetings and their credibility based in their personal identity. Psychological impacts investigate the ways journalists feel and think in the wake of continuous violence, that is, the journalist suffers from symptoms of anxiety, fear, exhaustion, and trauma. By examining these categories, we build an all-embracing model to explain the ordinary lives of reporters and assess their important influences of their working situations.

#### **4.3.1. Economic Challenges**

Reporting on terrorism is an area in which reporters regularly face considerable economic limitations, which obviously impact their work and well-being. Fisher and Park (2022) has given in their study that economic challenges can restrain journalists from accurate reporting. This research also addresses the economic aspects to see how journalists avoid reporting from the frontline of conflict areas because of financial volatility. The central economic problem facing journalists is the disparity in paid remunerations. The perception amongst many journalists is that being a journalist is taken by their pay as against personal risk that they face whilst reporting in combat zones. This remuneration disparity has a negative impact on their motivation and leads to ethical dilemmas as unhappily remunerated journalists have problems meeting high report standards of objectivity and quality. Beside low pay, journalists often pay for covering the important expenses for travel, protection, and purchasing necessary equipment. These are extra pressures that their finances face especially if media companies don't provide enough support for logistical and financial needs.

Journalists are largely uninsured for health and/or for life, and this leaves them and their loved ones in critical situations when they become injured or sick or when tragedy strikes. According to the lack of institutional support, there is increased insecurity and instability, and its

effect on reporters' mental resilience and confidence under high stress situations. Financial insecurity may have a severe effect on reporters' impartiality in their work. Financial straits may force reporters to choose actions in an attempt to either secure employment or placate sponsors, at the expense of an objective reporting. It is due to these persistent challenges that a large number of journalists are contemplating alternative careers for monetary stability. Several professionals in the field have expressed desire to quit because of the current economic instability caused by terrorist reporting.

These financial losses signal a bigger media crisis whereby journalists continue to be at risk without the institutional framework and the finances that protect them from losing their jobs and lives. In substance, this situation threatens the morale and safety of reporters as well as jeopardizing the collective trustworthiness and reliability of conflict journalism. It is hoped that from this analysis, the magnitude of these economic problems will displease media organizations, political leaders, and people committed to press freedom, to ensure that financial security and measures to keep journalists safe in risky areas remain a top priority.

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev
Salary doesn't justify risk in terrorism coverage	110	70	10	8	2	4.39	0.76
Self-funding of travel and gear	95	75	15	10	5	4.25	0.82
No insurance/financial protection during assignments	120	50	12	10	8	4.31	0.94
Economic insecurity limits objectivity	100	65	20	10	5	4.22	0.87
Considered leaving journalism due to economic risks	105	60	15	10	10	4.20	0.91

*Table 4.2: Stats of Economic Challenges*

The data is based on a Likert scale where the following abbreviations are used:

- **SA** = Strongly Agree
- **A** = Agree
- **N** = Neutral
- **D** = Disagree
- **SD** = Strongly Disagree
- **Mean** = Average score calculated from responses
- **Std. Dev** = Standard Deviation, which shows how much variation there is from the average

**Statement 1: "Salary doesn't justify risk in terrorism coverage"**

- **Responses:** SA = 110, A = 70, N = 10, D = 8, SD = 2
- **Mean:** 4.39
- **Standard Deviation:** 0.76

The list of economic challenges contains the item that has received the most favorable responses. Of all the responses, greatly, respondents (110 strongly agree, 70 agree), say they do not believe they are fairly compensated by their pay for the high-risk job requirements of terrorism coverage. A mean score at the level of 4.39 but at a low level of standard deviation (0.76) suggests that the agreement level among many participants is high and so are the participants' responses.

**Statement 2: "Self-funding of travel and gear"**

- **Responses:** SA = 95, A = 75, N = 15, D = 10, SD = 5
- **Mean:** 4.25
- **Standard Deviation:** 0.82

Many of the journalists claim that they are responsible for their travelling and equipment needs for field assignments. The situation is financially tough for many people based on the major

agreement of 95 SA and 75 A, and the mean which is 4.25, meaning that there is general agreement with a little more variation than the latter item.

### **Statement 3: "No insurance/financial protection during assignments"**

- **Responses:** SA = 120, A = 50, N = 12, D = 10, SD = 8
- **Mean:** 4.31
- **Standard Deviation:** 0.94

Among the respondents, large proportions, particularly those that represent the 120 who strongly agree express concern that their organizations do not provide financial coverage in the case of injury, death, or emergency. At a mean score of 4.31 respondents clearly have a lot of concerns and the standard deviation at 0.94 shows spread of opinions but not heterogeneous.

### **Statement 4: "Economic insecurity limits objectivity"**

- **Responses:** SA = 100, A = 65, N = 20, D = 10, SD = 5
- **Mean:** 4.22
- **Standard Deviation:** 0.87

In this section the researcher look at some of the ways in which concerns about money can affect the objectivity of reporters. Most of the respondents tell us that financial insecurity can disrupt the objective pursuit of reporting. The average response of 4.22, indicates that most people agree, while the standard deviation of 0.87 showcase that opinions are fairly diverse. **Statement 5: "Considered leaving journalism due to economic risks"**

- **Responses:** SA = 105, A = 60, N = 15, D = 10, SD = 10
- **Mean:** 4.20
- **Standard Deviation:** 0.91

Over half of the surveyed journalists (105 SA; 60 A) have considered leaving the profession because of apprehensions of financial stability and lack of support. That should be of the first importance because the extent of the problem is revealed. 0.91 represents a standard deviation, and 4.20 a mean indicating that majority assent was evident, but responses indicated some deviation.

#### **4.3.1.1 Interpretation of Economic Challenges Statistics**

The economic barriers that face journalists in the reporting of terrorism are widespread, and have excellent links with structural deficiencies in the media industry but Olsen et al. (2024) say that media firms can collectively face economic challenges as well. From the results, the common feeling by journalists is that their pay does not justify the dangerous task that they undertake in reporting on terrorist occurrences. A substantial majority that responded strongly agreed with this idea, which shows a clear discrepancy between reporting risks and what they get paid. Additionally, it is now a norm for journalists to foot their travelling bills, and set their own budget for essential reporting gear including protective gear, and recording equipment. These needs are self-financed and the impact on the journalists escalates the problem of low earnings faced by many. In addition, the lack of financial protection, or insurance, on journalists assignment becomes quite a concern. Many reporters find themselves lacking basic insurance; including life, medical or accident insurance leaving them and their families in dire straits in the event of an accident or death. Through the study, it is shown that economic pressures may undermine the objectivity of a journalist. The strains of worrying about money may bias reporters making them less able to resist external pressures or an unchallengeable editorial agenda. For most, the price of working in a war zone is too high, and they have been compelled to look at leaving their line of work. The financial risks faced by many journalists contemplating a departure from the profession

brings out an imbalanced and devalued role for conflict reporting in the present. Overall, these points are representative of the precarious state of economics for journalists required to deliver vital public information with little financial cushioning, lack of organizational reinforcement or lengthy job security.

***Figure 4: Mean Score of Economic Challenges***



#### **4.3.2 Social Challenges**

The coverage of terrorism is a challenge that faces journalists with the significant and multidimensional social obstacles that are based in the then dominant social beliefs, dynamics of class, and the expectation of the communities. Meijer (2022) thinks that societal challenges are parallel with journalism. It cannot be neglected. Based on the data, reports by journalists stand out for revealing that significant percentage report social pressure and threats when covering terrorism incidents. Such threats are usually made by extremist organizations, political leaders or members of the community that are opposed to thorough or unfriendly reporting. It was also indicated that journalists have great challenges as they belong to their social class/background. A large number of journalists argue that being from different economic classes makes it difficult for them to get access to important officials or unusual sources thus compromising the quality of the news they report. Such discrimination in relation to social slate reflects the bigger societal disparities and impacts on how journalist interact with each other in the professional life.

There is apparent worry that, in rare instances, the community discourages journalists from bringing such issues as conflict and violence to light. Such reluctance is often rooted in the fear of threats, following cultural practices, or belonging to local communities which circumstances are heightened by the existence of extremist networks. Such discouragement motivates journalists to interpretively constrict the scope of their reporting efforts, thus robbing the press of the capacity to expose wrongdoing and act as the powerful are held to account. As the evidence shows, journalists' backgrounds, which may include such things as their ethnicity, religion, or region of origin, can influence how they appear with regard to credibility for the people they come into contact with. Respondents observed that preconceptions about what journalists do based on background can lead audiences or sources to question their impartiality or intention, and compromise their credibility.

Journalist who endeavor to write incessantly about terrorism are risked with social alienation. The graphic and sensitive themes they deal with frequently result in absence of understanding from peers, friends or family who do not understand or accept their specialized work. The loneliness part of their job is compounded when the public doesn't understand or address their concerns. Such social pressure leads to the marginalisation of journalism professionals who are required to deal with systemic barriers which go beyond the dangers of working in the trade. The social environment has a significant effect on the everyday experiences of journalists reporting on terrorism is concluded by the study. Putting social threats, class-related barriers, discouragement by communities, biased views about background, and the sense of isolation together generates a nasty social landscape that damages journalists' freedom, confidence, and efficiency in their work.

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev
Faces social pressure/threats in terrorism coverage	100	60	20	15	5	4.20	0.90
Social class restricts access to officials	85	65	30	10	10	4.03	0.96
The community discourages conflict reporting	90	70	20	15	5	4.13	0.91
Background affects journalistic credibility	95	60	25	10	10	4.10	0.89
Feels isolated due to reporting focus	88	62	30	10	10	4.04	0.92

*Table 4.3: Stats of Social Challenges*

**Statement 1: "Faces social pressure/threats in terrorism coverage"**

- **Responses: SA = 100, A = 60, N = 20, D = 15, SD = 5**
- **Mean: 4.20**
- **Standard Deviation: 0.90**

The subject matter revolves around whether journalists get discouraged or intimidated by the public when reporting the aspect of terrorism. Majority of the respondents strongly agree or agree which means that social hostility is a significant barrier. Because of the mean 4.20 majority agrees with that statement, and the standard deviation 0.90 shows the responses are quite close to one another.

**Statement 2: "Social class restricts access to officials"**

- **Responses: SA = 85, A = 65, N = 30, D = 10, SD = 10**
- **Mean: 4.03**
- **Standard Deviation: 0.96**

It measures if socioeconomic standing prevents journalists from reaching out to key decision makers. In these stats, with a mean of 4.03, the data reveals that many participants believe

this to be a difficult issue. The fact that the standard deviation equals 0.96 means that not all participants have the same view but there is still agreement.

**Statement 3: "The community discourages conflict reporting"**

- **Responses: SA = 90, A = 70, N = 20, D = 15, SD = 5**
- **Mean: 4.13**
- **Standard Deviation: 0.91**

This assessment looks at journalists' perceptions that members of their own communities can prevent them from reporting on conflicts or terrorism. The dominance of "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" responses makes clear that this social disapproval is prevalent in a large portion of the sample. The resulting mean of 4.13 shows a clear consensus and the standard deviation of 0.91 some different thoughts.

**Statement 4: "Background affects journalistic credibility."**

- **Responses: SA = 95, A = 60, N = 25, D = 10, SD = 10**
- **Mean: 4.10**
- **Standard Deviation: 0.89**

This question looks if the journalists consider their own background – a person's ethnicity, region or religion – affects how others perceive them as credible. More than half of the respondents agree with this point of view, which has a mean response of 4.10 showing a common perception of the issue. A mean standard deviation of 0.89 indicates that these views on the matter are fairly diversified.

**Statement 5: "Feels isolated due to reporting focus"**

- **Responses: SA = 88, A = 62, N = 30, D = 10, SD = 10**
- **Mean: 4.04**
- **Standard Deviation: 0.92**

Lastly, in social challenges, this statement says whether journalists think they are isolated and primarily because of their reporting of conflict or terrorism. Strong support is apparent as based on the strong numbers of "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" responses given by the participants. A mean score of 4.04 shows respondents' general consensus whereas a standard deviation of 0.92 means respondents were not completely aligned with each other.

#### **4.3.2.1 Interpretation of Social Challenges Statistics**

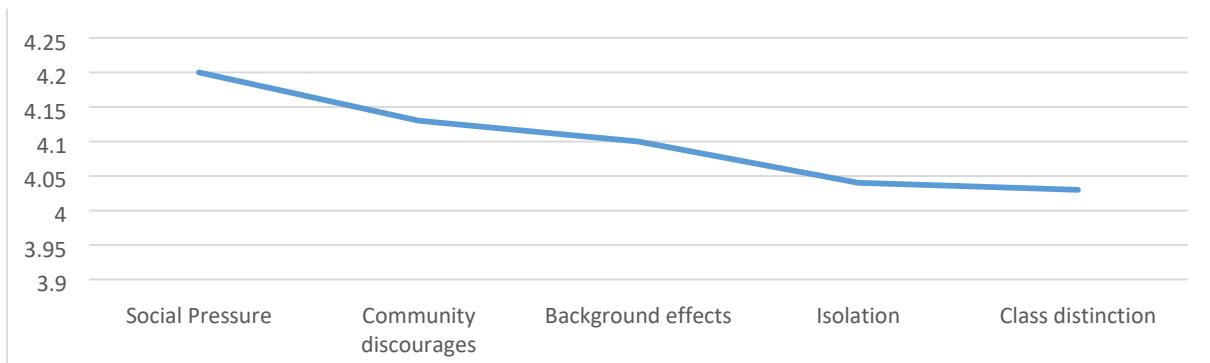
Ittefaq et al. (2021) say that there are many challenges faced by journalists in Pakistan and one of them is a societal issue. Based on the analysis made of journalists' social challenges in reporting on terrorism, it is apparent that a lot of societal pressure and resistance continue to exist. The most respondents in the study had indicated that social pressure and threats were major issues which they faced while reporting on terrorism. The mean score of 4.20 together with the response model from 100 strongly agreeing and 60 agreeing constitute that these challenges run in large numbers rather than being exceptional in journalism. These findings show that the social context of terrorism reporting is frequently a hostile environment for journalists, creating disincentives or additional hazards to reporting on terrorism.

Another theme that arises repeatedly is the way in which social class shapes the journalistic ability to communicate to officials. A mean of 4.03 and 150 total agreements, pointing out that journalists with lower income or who are socially marginalized frequently encounter obstacles while attempting to secure access to powerful sources, shows that this gap occurs. It is clear from the data that the community in general does not support stories about conflict or terrorism. A collaborative group of 160 respondents (90 from SA, 70 from A) showed that their communities frequently inform them to avoid conflict or terrorism reporting, or actively block their attempts. A mean score of 4.13 implies general agreement which indicates a society which frequently

disapproves of or discourages conflict-related reporting. Such discouragement may be triggered by hidden anxieties, wrong pieces of information, or the wish to stay away from controversial topics, which prevent substantive reporting.

Many respondents also acknowledged that a journalist's personal background may undermine credibility with a score for such of 4.10. Respondents (including those who strongly (95) or agreed (60)) regularly cited that features such as ethnicity, religion or place in their background influence the audience and institutional appeal of their journalism. This shows the prevalence of repeating systemic prejudices that influence the reception of news and reputation of journalistic balance. Also, journalists showed a lot of concern over feeling isolated due to their writings about terrorism and conflict. A mean score of 4.04, and most participants provided a significant endorsement, shows that journalists in serving to cover terrorism and conflicts often feel alienated from their colleagues or the public. However, the concerted social factors make it difficult for journalists to report in a responsible way on terrorism as a necessitating support at the institutional and community levels.

*Figure 5: Mean Score of Social Challenges*



### 4.3.3 Psychological Challenges

Say by Koster et al., (2022), “*Pakistan is considered to be relatively unsafe for journalists; however, little is known about how working in situations that involve a high risk of trauma exposure and personal threat impacts journalists' mental health*”. Unique psychological pressure that journalists experience in their reporting about terrorism is essentially connected with the insurmountable emotional. and mental strain part and parcel of the job. Having the mandate to record terrorism and conflicts, journalists have a tendency of experiencing significant psychological bearing as a result of the pressuring assignments. A growing issue is the emergence of anxiety in journalists as they report out of risky places. Reporters doing tales about terrorism tend to suffer from an anxiety that stems from an unending or unpredictable uncertainty and danger whilst doing their job, therefore, they are always exposed to physical vulnerability and horrific scenes. Such high degree of anxiety undermines mental resilience making it harder to cope with the emotional requirements of the work.

Frequently ignored, disruptive sleeping habits are also a common problem among journalists in war zones. Many working journalists who experience sleep issues after covering violent issues or traumatic issues indicate that the stress and trauma of the job reverberate long after finishing their work. Annoyed sleep patterns amongst journalists are frequently symptomatic of PTSD and are very closely related to fatigue, impaired cognitive abilities, and emotional disruptions. Not only do these symptoms continue to exist, but this fact proves the long-term psychological effects of terrorism reporting, as well as serious effects on the well-being of the reporters.

There is also a lot of concern over emotional draining among such journalists. As a consequence, journalists get burned out, their satisfaction with work reduces, and productivity

declines. It may, at some point, force journalists to seriously consider a change in the course of their profession if they are unable to cope with the huge psychological pressure any longer. Though emotionally costly, it is seldom recognized but it is able to exert significant impact on the lives of journalists both in and out of the workplace.

Jamil and Sohail (2021) report in their study that due to so much pressure in Pakistan and mental stress, many journalists have left this field. In this research, the respondents also express that they suffer from anxiety or panic at work, or off the job. A continuous threat of danger and a strong emotional connect in dealing with such subjects as terrorism lead to the lasting effects of psychological scars. Closely resembling these symptoms are perceptions of aggression, depression, and social withdrawal among journalists who often indicate these symptoms of trauma. Under such symptoms, it is become evident that offering full mental health resources to the journalists in the risky operations is necessary. The consequent effect of these stressors interferes with the journalists' mental and emotional health and their work. Journalists must immediately have access to improved mental health support, effective coping schemes and organizational support to deal with the unique psychological norms of terrorism reporting.

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev
Constant anxiety while covering terrorism	100	70	15	10	5	4.25	0.89
Sleep disturbances after witnessing violence	80	85	10	15	10	4.05	0.99
Emotional exhaustion post assignment	110	60	15	10	5	4.33	0.88
Fear or panic off duty	90	65	25	15	5	4.10	0.92
Symptoms of aggression/depression/social withdrawal	100	60	20	15	5	4.20	0.90

**Table 4.4: Stats of Psychological Challenges**

**Statement 1: "Constant anxiety while covering terrorism"**

- **Responses: SA = 100, A = 70, N = 15, D = 10, SD = 5**
- **Mean: 4.25**
- **Standard Deviation: 0.89**

The eleventh statement in the questionnaire assesses the level of anxiety of the journalists when they work on an issue related to terrorism. Numerous journalists involved in the survey said that they often experience anxiety when facing a job covering terrorism. To a high level of agreement, a mean score of 4.25 points would be assigned, as anxiety is a common phenomenon among journalists reporting on terrorism. A standard deviation of 0.89 means that although a significant number of journalists agree that they are affected by anxiety, anxiety feels differently among individuals.

**Statement 2: "Sleep disturbances after witnessing violence"**

- **Responses: SA = 80, A = 85, N = 10, D = 15, SD = 10**
- **Mean: 4.05**
- **Standard Deviation: 0.99**

It examines the psychological effect on people who are fortunate enough to see violent scenes reported by the journalists in case of terrorism stories. Over 80 percent of respondents, both 80 with a strong agreement and 85 with an agreement, said that they did not sleep well after being exposed to violent events. The mean 4.05 indicates a general agreement that these issues of sleep are a common occurrence. A standard deviation of 0.99 shows remarkable disparity in the kind of response to sleep disturbances but strengthens the fact that many are deeply affected psychologically.

**Statement 3: "Emotional exhaustion post assignment"**

- **Responses: SA = 110, A = 60, N = 15, D = 10, SD = 5**
- **Mean: 4.33**
- **Standard Deviation: 0.88**

The above statistics tell us the personal emotional pressure of journalists when completing terrorism assignments. A substantial percentage of journalists wrote that they strongly agree and agree that such assignments leave them feeling emotionally tired, and 110 respondents wrote they strongly agree. With a mean score of 4.33 it is evident that journalistic assignments frequently result in emotional exhaustion; the standard deviation of 0.88 indicates that the level of exhaustion varies somewhat between persons. This finding implies that although there is commonality of experience of emotional exhaustion, its magnitude appears to be somewhat different among journalists.

#### **Statement 4: "Fear or panic off duty"**

- **Responses: SA = 90, A = 65, N = 25, D = 15, SD = 5**
- **Mean: 4.10**
- **Standard Deviation: 0.92**

It measures the ongoing mental consequences of terrorism news reporting, showing fear or panic that many journalists still have, post-work. Journalists claimed that many of them, even though they were away from work, still experience fear or panic. With a mean score of 4.10, it means that the journalists generally agree on the anxiety, when not on the job. Having a standard deviation of 0.92, it is easy to understand that although regard for safety off duty is common among journalists, personal responses in this regard vary greatly in intensity.

#### **Statement 5: "Symptoms of aggression/depression/social withdrawal"**

- **Responses: SA = 100, A = 60, N = 20, D = 15, SD = 5**
- **Mean: 4.20**
- **Standard Deviation: 0.90**

Reporting on terrorism has various psychological effects on the victims including aggression, depression and social withdrawal – this statement analyses. About a half of

respondents (100 strongly agreeing and 60 agreeing) responded that they had experienced these mental health effects. The average response score of '4.20' confirms the fact that such symptoms have very many occasions to be experienced in journalists involved in terrorism coverage. The moderate standard deviation of 0.90 shows the wide dispersion between journalists' experiences with some people affected more or less.

All in all, the combined responses show the pressing mental pressure reporters experience when reporting on terrorism. Viewing anxiety, disrupted sleep, burnout, and expression of aggression and depression as common within journalists, it is clear that psychological care and intervention should become the top priority in such high risk environments.

#### **4.3.3.1 Interpretation of Psychological Challenges Statistics**

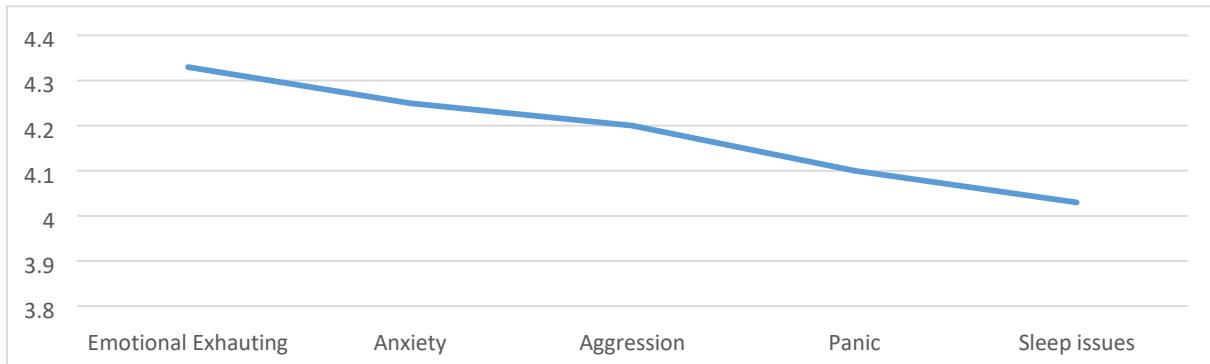
Working with terrorism coverage puts journalists under enormous psychological strain that significantly affects the emotional and mental health of the journalists. According to this research, a large part of journalists is under a constant state of nervousness when reporting on the events of terrorism. Raza et al. (2021) also reported that many freelance journalists were killed in Pakistan which created panic among the others. This anxiety is not momentary; This experience continues and therefore fear and stress are significant and constant in their careers. Respondents are always giving this experience, they note that constant encounter with violent and dangerous environments causes constant tension and vulnerability when on assignment.

One major recurring challenge is that violent incidents also end up becoming a reason for interrupted sleep. According to the survey results, it is obvious that journalists often report on disturbance of sleep after violence episodes thereby exhibiting the extensive and resilient psychological impacts that go beyond their workplace. Such issues can erode their health and mental stamina, so it is more difficult for them to be focused and professional in later exercises.

The mental fatigue that follows reaches far beyond the physical and is of great detrimental effect on their capacity to endure future tough experiences emotionally.

Moreover, journalists feel the fear and panic, which surpasses the boundaries of their job. Even after work hours, a great number of the participants mentioned feeling anxious and uneasy. The integration of work-related pressure and personal stress provides the justification for in-depth psychological interventions. The occurrence of these symptoms means that the psychological needs accumulated, which pose a threat for further mental problems. Profuse field experiences limit the ability for journalists to return to the normal social arena and integrating emotionally into the society.

***Figure 6: Mean Score of Psychological Challenges***



Letting it all sum up, in the question of the psychological effects on journalists reporting terrorism, the effects are especially evident. The data underline the need for institutional support mechanisms such as counseling, support by mental health services, and some changes in the policy to address journalists' emotional health in high risk reporting environment.

#### **4.3.4 Mean Score Analysis of Economic, Social, and Psychological Challenges**

Under the analysis of the mean scores connected with the Economic Challenges, Social Challenges, and the Psychological Challenges, we get the integral insight into the barriers

journalists reporting terrorism face. All the collected responses reveal repeating themes of their concern in each domain, showing the complex pressures, which are affecting both their journalistic production and health. Economic issues were overwhelmingly the main concern by journalists, who focused on issues such as minuscule income, financial risk, and lack of access to insurance. After economic challenges, social hurdles were followed, which highlighted pressures from society, difficulty of access to trustworthy ideas, and discouragement at the community level. In spite of the overall mean rating being lower, psychological problems were of the highest importance since they were accompanied by prolonged anxiety, emotional fatigue, and sustained symptoms of trauma. Such outcomes clearly imply the need for prompt structural changes and supportive procedures to be applied in order to safeguard journalists from the combined effect of economic uncertainty, the social hardships and psychological turmoil.

Dimension	Mean	Interpretation
Economic Challenges	4.27	High concern
Social Challenges	4.10	Notable social exclusion
Psychological Impacts	4.19	Severe mental health effects

***Table 4.5: Mean Score Analysis of all Three Variables***

From the analysis of the mean scores, it is vivid that the economic Challenges, social Challenges, and psychological has an impact on journalists. It indicates a big struggle the journalists face in trying to report on the terrorism-related issues. Poor finances, uncompensated labor, and lack of protective benefits became the leading concerns among journalists as indicated by a mean score of 4.27 by Economic Challenges. These economic hardships threaten the security of reporters, their professional satisfaction and autonomy to perform their work.

Moreover, social Challenges scoring 4.10 has highlighted some important cases of social exclusion among journalists. The sample also mentions barriers such as societal pressure, barriers to official engagement hindered by social class, and stigmatization occasioned by the journalist's background. Consequently, these social barriers inhibit the freedom of operation of journalists, causing segregated experience at work and in everyday life.

In addition, psychological Impacts mean score was 4.19, thus high degree of negative mental health effects. Respondents mentioned anxiety, emotional strain, and trauma on more than one occasion, underscoring the long term emotional setbacks from working in hazardous workplaces. The near equal scores of the three variables show the great necessity for specific institutional actions, the increase of assistance for the mental health, and a thorough set of reforms which would be dedicated to remediating the critical problems of the journalists.

#### **4.4 Discussion**

Hilmi (2021) says that discussion section in a dissertation is one of the important sections which systematically comment on the results. In this part, the researcher discusses the findings of data analysis as related to the objectives for this research, with a detailed discussion of the statistical aspects. The data is analyzed to bring out the effect different economic, social and psychological challenges have on journalists when writing on terrorism incidents. Each dimension is discussed relative to the aim of the study, providing a better picture of the challenges and risks that media experts face while covering terrorism. The current part identifies the link between the research findings and the objectives mentioned above, with a view to offering useful insights to journalists' realities, and highlighting the role of institutional assistance and policy adjustment.

**Research objective no. 1:**

***What are the major economic challenges faced by journalists during the coverage of terrorism in the selected areas (Tank, Kohat and Karak)?***

Research Objective No. 1 is aimed at analyzing the major economic problems prevailing among journalists in covering terrorist cases in Tank, Kohat and Karak. The main scope of this mission is to explore the economic effect of journalism in conflict-affected regions considering the many safety threats that journalists face. This goal will require extensive review of the financial management of journalists during high risk periods in terms of just compensation, employer assistance, insurance coverage and provision for travel and safety supplies. The study aims at determining how economic uncertainty affects their performance at work and whether monetary interests shape their professional destinies. Through pursuit of this goal, the study expects to show the impact of financial issues on susceptibility of journalists covering areas of terrorism.

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
EC1: Salary doesn't justify terrorism coverage risk	200	4.39	0.76
EC2: Self-funding for travel and safety	200	4.25	0.82
EC3: No insurance/financial support on assignment	200	4.31	0.94
EC4: Economic insecurity limits objectivity	200	4.22	0.87
EC5: Considered leaving journalism due to income/job risks	200	4.20	0.91

***Table 4.6: Descriptive Statistics of Economic Challenges***

The information and analyses described in Section 4.3.1, Economic Challenges, is in strict conformity with Research Objective No. 1 <<- The focus of this research is to emphasize major economic challenges that journalists face while reporting terrorism in the area of Tank, Kohat and Karak. The objective is as follows – to gain insight into economic difficulties suffered by journalists while working on stories connected to terrorism in the zones of conflict. The findings

of this section affirm an uncontested and unbroken chain of financial hardship that perfectly achieves the goals described in Research Objective No. 1.

The analysis includes remarks addressing such issues as unremunerated work, payments made from personal funds, lack of coverage by means of insurance, economical pressure bringing biased reporting and the concept of leaving the profession because of financial vulnerability. Such problems represent struggles of journalists working in the regions that lack resources. Repeatedly high mean scores for all items (range between 4.20 and 4.39), as well as respondents' consensus indicates that these economic challenges are substantial and experienced by many. Together, the findings show that journalists constantly suffer from economic instability, lack of insurance, and a limited support that can lead to personal trouble as well as professional troubles.

In addition, from a narrative perspective, the economic difficulties enumerated are systemic, a consequence of structural limitations of media institutions operating in precarious context. The recurring issues, identified by respondents, transcend isolated cases and have bearing on the professional stability of respondents and the preciseness of their reports. Therefore, the analysis achieves its goal by identifying and giving attention to the major economic barriers to journalists in the concerned areas. By combining the numerical findings and the interpretive account the study meets with its purpose revealing enormous weaknesses in the financial sphere of the conflict reporting to the reporters.

### ***Research objective No. 2:***

***What is the nature of social obstacles journalists face during their work in the selected areas?***

The scope of the research objective is to determine the socially entrenched non-economic obstacles that reporters face in working in the areas under conflict such as Tank, Kohat and Karak.

To meet this research objective, an in-depth analysis of the societal context in which journalists operate is required; how attitudes, cultural norms, community objections, politics, religion and social reputations affect their activities among others. It involves research of the ways, in which these social factors affect journalists' ability to report freely, be credible, safe and be able to present information impartially.

The objective of this study is to enlighten the presumably unseen yet powerful social pressures that hinder journalism, ranging from venomous local reactions, to reluctance from family, to the stigma afforded through their day to day work. While not only considering interrelationships between people, but also including an analysis of society-wide-practice and guideline, this research investigates how reporters' safety and freedom of expression are affected by the larger body (society). In its essence, it asks how cultural and personal dimension shape the limits regarding what journalists may report in conflict-scarred areas.

Variable Label	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
SC1: Social pressure/threats when reporting	200	4.20	0.90
SC2: Social class limits access to sources	200	4.03	0.96
SC3: The Community discourages conflict reporting	200	4.13	0.91
SC4: Background affects journalistic credibility	200	4.10	0.89
SC5: Feels isolated due to reporting focus	200	4.04	0.92

**Table 4.7: Descriptive Statistics of Social Challenges**

The data analysis of “Social Challenges” is strongly comparable to Research Objective No. 2 devoted to the study of social challenges of those who work as journalists in the selected areas. The key objective of this research is to figure out how societal elements interfere with journalistic

freedom, credibility, access to professional opportunities especially when dealing sensitive issues like terrorism.

The findings include a mixture of numerical and descriptive data, and one can observe an effective fulfilment of the purpose of the research. The factors highlighted such social pressure, barriers to their access because of class, discouraging attitudes in communities, background-related difficulties to credibility, and feelings of isolation, are key social barriers faced by journalists. Ranging from 4.03 to 4.20, the results indicate that most journalists recognize these social issues negatively impacting their work in a forceful way. As another example, the maximum mean score (4.20) implies that social intimidation is rampant among journalists during terrorism coverage owing to the influence of community, extremist or political groups.

In line with this, the figures of journalists' social class and background (thus, scores of 4.03 and 4.10) show the way in which structural discrimination and identity-based bias dim journalists' credibility and enable them to collect information. These results are in line with the goal of having looked at how societal frameworks and dominant ideas impede the performance of journalistic activities. The analysis identifies the fact that journalists are often discouraged by the closest people and may feel estranged due to the controversial nature of their work. This combination of qualitative insights and quantitative results provides a concrete picture of the social context journalists move in every day. The research attains depth on these challenges based on a combination of statistical and thematic findings in order to support the overall purpose of the study.

***Research objective no. 3:***

***What are the psychological impacts of terrorism on journalists in the selected areas?***

The aim of this objective is to discover the impact of constant exposure to terrorism-related events upon journalists active in targeted areas (in terms of mental and emotional states). Reporting

on terrorism usually involves witnessing traumatic scenes, connecting with victims or people involved and experiencing constant fear of threats and danger to one's personal safety. The research will outline the mental health stress endured by journalists from working like this, with issues of anxiety, stress, depression, trauma, and emotional burnout at stake. The research appraises the influences of the stressors in their daily lives, professional careers, and long-term mental stability of journalists. At this point, the aim reveals the minimized psychological pressure of reporting terrorism and calls for the use of psychological support and safety measures for journalists.

Variable Label	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
PC1: Anxiety from exposure to terrorism	200	4.25	0.89
PC2: Sleep disturbances after coverage	200	4.05	0.99
PC3: Emotional exhaustion after fieldwork	200	4.33	0.88
PC4: Panic/fear even when not reporting	200	4.10	0.92
PC5: Aggression/depression/withdrawal symptoms	200	4.20	0.90

**Table 4.8: Descriptive Statistics of Psychological Challenges**

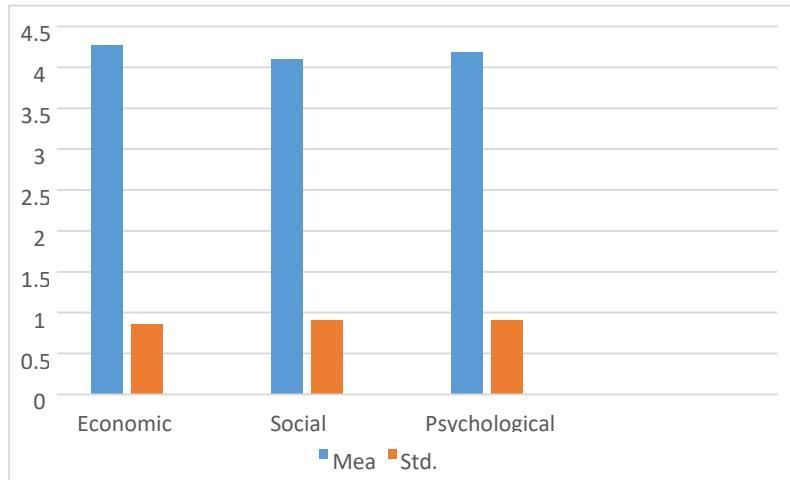
Towards achieving the goal of evaluation of the psychological effects of terrorism on journalists in the chosen areas, this report has completely implemented and achieved this research objective. The study reflects a structured analysis of journalists' psychological problems, which is immediately associated with the purpose of analyzing emotional and psychological effects caused by terrorism coverage.

From the findings, it is clear that journalists suffer from the following persistent anxiety, emotional exhaustion, sleep disturbance and off-duty fear which all point to significant mental strain as a result of exposure to extreme violence and high risk environment. The analysis properly emphasizes the lasting and accumulating character of these exposures and associates the reported

symptoms with the general psychological dysfunctions, represented by PTSD, burnout, depression, and social life withdrawal. These findings get further confirmation from numerical results. Average responses of 4.05 to 4.33 imply that people more or less agree about the intense psychological strain associated with terrorism reporting. An illustrative example of this is a mean score of 4.33 for emotional exhaustion which shows that this symptom is worst experienced by reporters. A relatively uniform set of values of standard deviations (from 0.88 to 0.99) assumes that although the effects are generally agreed upon, the level of intensity of the personal feeling is subject to variation between the subjects.

Moreover, the interpretations section reinforces these findings by associating the psychological symptoms with actual-world implications, such as weakened cognitive capabilities, lowered professional impulse, and difficulties returning to social life. This justifies the correlation of the analysis with the third objective since this not just documents the symptoms but also defends its magnitude and applicability. Consecutively, the research addresses its third objective due to the combination of statistical findings and interpretative analysis that shows great mental health problems of journalists in the area of terrorism reporting and the urgent need for psychological support.

*Figure 7: Aggregate of all Variables*



A comparison statistical summary of the three important dimensions (Economic Challenges, Social Challenges and Psychological Impacts) for dealing with terrorism reporting is shown in the above figure 4.7 in line with the objectives of the study. The data clearly indicate that there is a great deal of worry experienced by journalists along every dimension, drawing attention to the broad range of concerns that journalists face in covering terrorism.

That Economic Challenges are the most important issue faced by journalists is signified both by the highest mean score (4.27) and moderate standard deviation ( $SD = 0.86$ ). This upholds the first objective of the research, which is to evaluate the economical difficulties of journalists reporting on terrorism. to analyze the economic weak points of journalists working on stories on terrorism. Researches observe whereby journalists face economic instability since they have limited hazard pay, few insurance, unstable employment and lack of adequate financial support from organizations. The coherent perspectives held by respondents reflect the sense of an economic crisis shared, yet frequently ignored in policy and organizational spheres.

Social Challenges exhibits a mean value of 4.10 and a standard deviation of 0.91, that is, while there is a lot of concern regarding the social burdens, there is great variation in the individual experiences among respondents. This dimension corresponds with the purpose of realizing the

second aim: respond In conjunction with the data it would seem that journalists frequently find it hard to get back to a normal life having covered traumatic events, and they habitually get little empathy and support from those who are not aware of the nature of the profession. The high mean score indicates widespread agreement between journalists regarding these challenges but individual answers present variations between journalists.

Lastly, the Psychological mean score of 4.19 and SD 0.91 showed significant levels of emotional and mental stress, thus corroborating the third study purpose. to research on the psychic pressure that dogs the journalists. Anxiety, PTSD, burnout, sleep disruption, and continued emotional disengagement are common to journalists. The mean figures recorded in both social and psychological problems illustrate the fact that mental health fight has equal pull with economic and social forces. Even when the standard deviation is moderate, this shows that journalists collectively suffer from these psychological effects, but they vary on individuals' capacity to resist it.

Based on these results, a unified response is evident, which indicates that immediate structural modifications are required. It is necessary for media organizations and policy makers to address these economic uncertainties; create social support and provide mental health services to ensure the safety and dignity as well as wellness of journalists during terrorism coverage.

#### **4.5 Critical Commentary**

This research indeed analyzed the complicated impact of terrorism reporting on the journalists of Pakistan paying attention to three key goals: to test financial struggles, social pressure and psychological state among the journalists affected. Using descriptive, thematic analysis and statistical methods, the research reveals a terrible and keen sketch of what journalists in perilous context must face.

From the point of view of quantitative analysis, statistical results clearly showed raised anxiety throughout the entire range of covered issues. Economic Challenges achieved the highest mean score ( $M = 4.27$ ), which indicates that journalists are to varying degrees aware of a high degree of financial instability, inadequate protection from the media industry, and an insufficient amount of reward for taking risks. This augments the first objective by showing wider systemic failures in media organs that fail to provide adequate resources to the journalists responsible for some of those tasks.

Social Challenges received a positive response within the participants, indicated by an average score of 4.10. The second objective is also supported by research, in that journalists often encounter challenges in personal connections, social withdrawn and societal lack of support. Further, these challenges are yet worsened when journalists are stigmatized by their communities when they provide coverage on issues considered sensitive or controversial. The standard deviation parameter used here indicates that although most people experience such social issues, the measure and type of such challenges vary from one person to another and may vary depending on support networks.

Psychological Impacts ( $M = 4.19$ ) are highly relevant to economic concerns and they support the third objective of the study. The journalists reported regularly on persistent posttraumatic stress symptoms; anxiety, depression, emotional exhaustion, and a constant state of fear and insurity. The findings strongly endorse past investigations, which emphasize the emotional and mental pressure of reporting in zones of conflict. When the journalists don't get proper care for the struggle in their minds – such treatment threatens not only their mental health, but also the reputation and quality of the coverage. It transpired from our conversations that journalists' outstanding commitment and fortitude are frequently watered down by deficiencies in

their mental health care, workplace protection and public appreciation, exposing them to the possibility that they are not supported and ignored.

In conclusion, the study reveals that the transforming world of terrorism reporting has serious consequences for journalists, their professional life as well as their well-being which many times is distressing. Structural reforms, access to mental health services as well as policy strengthening are crucial needs. Dealing with such problems is not only an issue of ethical journalism, but rather an important issue when it comes to maintaining free, safe and responsible press within democracies.

## CHAPTER NO. 5

### 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Overall summary

This research looks into how covering terrorism impacts journalists in Pakistan. Noor and Hameed (2024) reported that due to terrorism, journalism has become a difficult job. The main goal is to see how this kind of work affects journalists both in their careers and their personal lives—financially, socially, and emotionally. A key issue here is that there isn't enough recognition from institutions or society about the stress and dangers journalists face when reporting from dangerous areas. While some studies have looked at press freedom and job hazards, not many have focused on how terrorism reporting affects journalists' overall well-being. The study was based on three main questions: (1) What financial problems do journalists deal with while covering terrorism? (2) What social challenges do they face in this line of work? (3) How does this reporting impact their mental health? These questions led to three objectives: to look at the financial troubles journalists encounter, to investigate the social pressures tied to their work, and to discuss the psychological effects of reporting on terrorism.

This study is important because it adds to what we know in academic circles and can help media practices. Documenting journalists' personal experiences, it gives useful insights for media groups, policy-makers, and mental health supporters. It stresses the need for media organizations to create support systems, provide financial and emotional help, and acknowledge the risks journalists take to keep the public informed. The data analysis showed that journalists are really worried about three main areas. First, economic issues scored the highest ( $M = 4.27$ ), with concerns like low pay, job insecurity, and not having safety allowances. Social issues followed ( $M = 4.10$ ), pointing out feelings of isolation, family problems, and social stigma. Psychological impacts were

also significant ( $M = 4.19$ ), with many reporting trauma, anxiety, and burnout. These findings back up the study's main point: journalists dealing with terrorism face serious issues that often get ignored. In short, reporting on terrorism in Pakistan is full of economic struggles, social exclusion, and mental health issues. This highlights the need for better policies and changes in institutions to ensure journalists have a safer and more supportive work environment. Recognizing their challenges is a crucial first step toward improving the media landscape.

## 5.2 Conclusion

This research looked into how reporting on terrorism impacts journalists in Pakistan, focusing on the economic, social, and mental challenges they deal with in a risky job. The goal was to figure out how constant exposure to violence and danger influences these journalists, even outside of their work. The findings showed that journalists working in this field face a lot of pressures. Economically, many struggle with low pay and a lack of support, which makes their jobs even tougher. Socially, they often feel isolated from their communities and families because of the stigma that comes with their work. This isolation can lead to feelings of loneliness and disconnect.

The mental health effects were the most concerning. Many journalists reported increased anxiety, emotional burnout, trouble sleeping, and signs of post-traumatic stress. These issues don't just go away; they're long-lasting and affect their overall well-being, even when they're not working. The significant scores across economic, social, and psychological challenges show just how hard terrorism reporting can be on these professionals. This study points out the urgent need for better support and mental health resources for journalists in conflict zones. Recommendations for policymakers include improving pay, offering psychological counseling, setting up safety measures, and creating social support networks.

In conclusion, this research highlights the need for better protection and support for journalists covering conflict. It also emphasizes the importance of recognizing and addressing the mental health issues that come with reporting on terrorism. The study calls for policy changes to improve the work environment and well-being of journalists in dangerous settings.

### **5.2.1.Suggestions**

- Create Mental Health Programs: Set up mental health support for journalists who cover terrorism, giving them access to counseling, therapy, and stress relief tools.
- Boost Pay: Offer better pay and job security for journalists in high-risk areas, making sure they're compensated fairly for the tough work they do.
- Safety Procedures: Develop clear safety plans for journalists reporting on terrorism, including protective gear and emergency plans for dangerous locations.
- Training for Journalists: Provide ongoing training on mental health, safety, and stress management to prepare journalists for the difficulties they might encounter.
- Peer Support Groups: Build support networks within news organizations for journalists to share their experiences and help each other deal with the emotional stress of their jobs.
- Post-Assignment Support: Create programs to help journalists readjust to life after covering traumatic events.
- Encourage Union Formation: Support the creation of unions or groups that advocate for journalists' rights, fair pay, and better working conditions in conflict areas.
- Legal Protections: Strengthen legal support for journalists, ensuring they have access to work-related injury insurance and protection against violence and harassment.

- Increase Awareness Among Media Outlets: Help media organizations understand the mental health challenges journalists face and encourage them to set up support systems for their staff.
- Public Awareness Efforts: Launch campaigns to educate the public on the mental health issues journalists encounter and why it's important to support them.

### 5.3 Recommendations for Future Research

1. Looking into the Long-Term Effects of Reporting on Terrorism: Future studies should focus on how long-term exposure to trauma affects journalists' personal lives and job stability over time.
2. Gender-Specific Psychological Challenges: It would be helpful to research the unique psychological issues male and female journalists face in conflict zones and how their coping strategies differ.
3. Cross-Country Comparisons: Future research could look at the social and psychological challenges journalists face in different countries, especially in areas dealing with ongoing terrorism, to spot trends and specific regional issues.
4. Mental Health Support Program Effectiveness: We should evaluate how well current mental health programs work for journalists and pinpoint what's working and what isn't.
5. How Technology Affects Journalists in Conflict Zones: It's important to explore how new technologies, like social media and real-time reporting tools, impact the well-being of journalists covering terrorism.
6. Training and Coping Skills: We need to examine how training in resilience and safety affects how journalists handle the pressures of reporting on conflicts.
7. Tracking Journalists' Mental Health: Long-term studies could help us monitor journalist mental health over time, especially those who frequently cover violence and terrorism.
8. Ethical Challenges in Reporting Terrorism: More research could look into the ethical dilemmas journalists face covering terrorism and how these challenges add to their stress.
9. The Impact of Social Media: We should study how social media influences journalists' experiences and mental health while covering terrorism, particularly the pressure of reporting online.

10. How news organizations Support Mental Health: Research can shed light on how newsroom policies on mental health shape journalists' emotional well-being and reveal gaps in current practices.
11. Peer Support Networks: We should look into how effective peer support networks are in newsrooms for journalists in conflict areas.
12. Coping Strategies for Journalists: We need to investigate the different coping strategies journalists use in terrorism reporting and which ones help prevent longterm psychological issues.
13. Freelance vs. Staff Journalists: It's worth examining the unique challenges freelance journalists face compared to those at larger media outlets, especially concerning safety and mental health resources.
14. Cultural Influence on Psychological Effects: Let's study how cultural attitudes toward journalists covering terrorism impact their mental health and the effectiveness of available support.
15. Crisis Communication and Mental Health: Researching how crisis communication methods within news organizations affect journalists' mental health during and after reporting on terrorism is crucial.

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