

MS Research Thesis

**Factors Affecting Environmental Reporting Journalist**

**Perspective**



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## Table of Contents

ABSTRACT .....	iii
1.0 INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Background of the Study .....	1
1.2 Problem Statement .....	17
1.3 Significant of the Study .....	18
1.4 Research Objectives .....	18
1.5 Research Questions .....	18
2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW .....	19
2.1 Theoretical Framework .....	32
3.0 METHODOLOGY .....	36
3.1 Research Design .....	36
3.2 Data Source .....	36
3.3 Method .....	36
3.4 Study Sampling .....	37
4.0 DATA ANALYSIS .....	38
Tables 4.1 - 4.9 .....	38
4.10 Implementation of the Study .....	42
5.0 DISCUSSION CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS .....	43
5.1 Discussion .....	43
5.2 Conclusion .....	44
5.3 Suggestions .....	44
REFERENCES .....	47

## ABSTRACT

Climate change is a global problem that has a significant impact on human life. Climate journalism is an important area of research due to the magnitude and impact of climate change. In this study the researcher critically analyzed the factors that influence environmental journalists while reporting on climate change stories. The research also highlighted the challenges and obstacles that both the practitioners and theoreticians of environmental journalism face in Pakistan and elsewhere to make it a well-rounded academic discipline. A semi-structured interview protocol was utilized in the interviews. The interviews delivered a deeper understanding of the media coverage of violence and conflict events in Pakistan. In the current analysis, the researcher critically analyzed the news media construction of debates on environmental crises and the role of political and economic factors that influence media reporting. The researcher conducted interview 30 journalists (news reporters, editors, photographers) working for media (print, broadcast, online) in Islamabad. Purposive sampling technique was used to recruit journalists for the study. In this study, the researcher critically examined the news media construction of debates on environmental crises and the role of political and economic factors that influence media reporting.

**Key words:** *Environmental, Reporting and Journalists*

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Pakistan is one of the ten countries most at risk from climate change (Eckstein et al., 2020). In this critical situation, it is essential for institutions, especially the news media, to raise awareness and educate the public about the dangers of the crisis. Research has shown that mass media, particularly news outlets, play a vital role as a key source of information on climate change (Newman et al., 2020). However, in today's era of misinformation and overwhelming media choices, climate change discussions are often influenced by "politicized rhetoric" (Pinto et al., 2019).

The climate change crisis is one of the serious problems that the denizens of the universe have to deal with in the times to come. There are strong indications that the coming decades will see a commotion in the patterns of climate in different parts of the world which will have a horrendous impact on the ecosystems, agriculture, and health of the people. These abnormal changes can happen in the guise of heavy torrential rains and flooding resulting in huge risks to human security, damages to infrastructure and economy and even wiping away of low-lying countries like Maldives. Pakistan is also included in the list of countries that are prone to natural disasters due to changes in climatic conditions. Since climate change can be in an array of forms like natural disasters, emissions, etc. that are related to each other and the important functions of modern societies like transportation and production of goods (Arvalho, 2007), it is essential to produce an optimum level of cooperation and coordination among the important stakeholders including government, industry and the public to avoid the catastrophic effects of environmental degradations.

Media and journalism can play an important role in such a scenario to create awareness about the hazardous effects of the climate change crisis and at the same time impress upon the policymakers to take corrective measures at the earliest. However to do that, first it is essential to analyze the existing patterns of media reporting of environmental crises and then identify best practices that are consistent with the professional considerations of journalism. In this article, the researcher critically analyzed the news media construction of debates on environmental crises and the role of political and economic factors that influence media reporting. It was also highlight the challenges and obstacles that both the practitioners and theoreticians of environmental journalism face in Pakistan and elsewhere to make it a well-rounded academic discipline.

Both the news and entertainment genres of media are usually considered to produce a social environment that is incompatible with the principles of environmental protection. Media driven by market forces and commercialism promotes values like materialism, progress, technology, worldliness, mobility, consumption, purchase of all things, etc. that could have serious repercussions for the environment (Carvalho, 2007). Moreover, media preserve the status quo and reinforce the current dispositions and thinking of the people about life and society. On the other hand, environmental protection measures often call for a departure from the routinized way and encourage people to adopt new and innovative practices to help solve environmental problems.

Environmental reporting has emerged as an essential aspect of journalism, reflecting the growing global concern over environmental issues and their socio-economic implications. It encompasses the systematic collection, analysis, and dissemination of information related to the environment and its various components, aiming to educate, inform, and engage the public in critical discussions (Hansen, 2018). The field has gained prominence in recent decades, driven by rising awareness of environmental challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. In this context, environmental reporting serves as a bridge between scientific research, policy-making, and public understanding.

The roots of environmental reporting can be traced back to the early 20th century when journalists began covering issues such as deforestation, wildlife conservation, and industrial pollution. Over time, these efforts have evolved into a specialized field, characterized by its focus on scientific accuracy and its commitment to raising awareness about environmental sustainability (Smith & Duffy, 2003). As environmental issues became more complex and interconnected, the demand for accurate and comprehensive reporting grew, necessitating a nuanced approach to the subject.

One of the defining features of environmental reporting is its reliance on scientific data and expertise. Journalists in this field often collaborate with scientists, environmentalists, and policy analysts to provide accurate and credible information (Carvalho, 2010). This collaboration ensures that the public receives well-rounded insights into environmental phenomena, fostering informed decision-making and proactive engagement. Moreover, the integration of scientific perspectives into journalism underscores the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in addressing environmental challenges.

Environmental reporting also plays a critical role in holding stakeholders accountable for their actions. Governments, corporations, and individuals often contribute to environmental degradation, whether through deforestation, greenhouse gas emissions, or waste generation. By exposing such activities, journalists act as watchdogs, prompting corrective actions and promoting transparency (Boykoff, 2011). Investigative reporting, in particular, has proven instrumental in uncovering environmental crimes and injustices, ensuring that perpetrators are brought to justice and that the public is informed of potential risks.

A key challenge in environmental reporting lies in simplifying complex scientific concepts without compromising accuracy. Climate change, for instance, involves intricate processes and terminologies that can be difficult for the average person to understand. Journalists must therefore balance the need for simplicity with the obligation to maintain scientific integrity, often relying on analogies, visuals, and storytelling techniques to convey their messages effectively (Hansen, 2018). This delicate balance is crucial in ensuring that environmental issues are accessible and engaging to diverse audiences.

The advent of digital media has significantly transformed the landscape of environmental reporting. Online platforms, social media, and multimedia tools have expanded the reach and impact of environmental journalism, enabling real-time updates and interactive storytelling (Allan, 2017). Digital media has also facilitated greater audience participation, allowing readers to share, comment on, and contribute to environmental stories. This shift has democratized information dissemination, empowering individuals to engage with and act on environmental issues in unprecedented ways.

Despite these advancements, environmental reporting faces numerous obstacles, including political interference, corporate pressure, and limited resources. In many cases, journalists encounter resistance from powerful entities seeking to downplay or obscure environmental problems. Such challenges underscore the need for ethical integrity and resilience in environmental journalism (Boykoff, 2011). Additionally, the financial constraints faced by many news organizations often result in inadequate coverage of environmental topics, further highlighting the importance of dedicated funding and institutional support.

Environmental reporting is not just about highlighting problems; it also emphasizes solutions. Constructive journalism, which focuses on positive developments and potential remedies, has gained traction in recent years, offering hope and motivation to audiences (McIntyre

& Gyldensted, 2017). By showcasing success stories and innovative approaches to environmental conservation, journalists can inspire individuals and communities to adopt sustainable practices and contribute to global efforts.

The global nature of environmental issues necessitates a collaborative approach to reporting. Environmental journalists often work across borders, sharing resources, information, and expertise to address transnational challenges such as climate change and plastic pollution. Initiatives like the Earth Journalism Network and the Climate Investigations Center exemplify such collaboration, fostering a sense of solidarity and shared responsibility among journalists worldwide (Hansen, 2018).

Cultural sensitivity is another important aspect of environmental reporting. Different communities have unique relationships with their environment, shaped by cultural, historical, and socio-economic factors. Recognizing and respecting these perspectives enhances the relevance and impact of environmental journalism, ensuring that it resonates with diverse audiences (Smith & Duffy, 2003). By incorporating indigenous knowledge and local experiences, journalists can provide a more comprehensive and inclusive understanding of environmental issues.

The ethical dimensions of environmental reporting are multifaceted, encompassing accuracy, fairness, and responsibility. Journalists must avoid sensationalism and bias, striving instead to present balanced and evidence-based narratives (Carvalho, 2010). Ethical reporting also involves acknowledging uncertainties and limitations, particularly when dealing with emerging scientific research. Transparency in sourcing and methodology further reinforces the credibility of environmental journalism.

Education plays a pivotal role in fostering effective environmental reporting. Many journalists lack the specialized knowledge required to cover complex environmental topics, resulting in superficial or inaccurate coverage. Training programs, workshops, and academic courses in environmental journalism can address this gap, equipping reporters with the skills and expertise needed to excel in this field (Allan, 2017). Such initiatives also promote lifelong learning, enabling journalists to stay abreast of evolving environmental trends and technologies.

Public trust is a cornerstone of successful environmental reporting. In an era of misinformation and fake news, journalists must work diligently to establish credibility and build trust with their audiences. Fact-checking, peer review, and adherence to journalistic standards are essential in maintaining the integrity of environmental journalism (Boykoff, 2011). Trustworthy

reporting not only informs but also empowers the public to make informed decisions and take meaningful action.

Environmental reporting often intersects with other domains, such as economics, politics, and health. For instance the economic implications of transitioning to renewable energy or the health impacts of air pollution are integral to understanding environmental issues. This interconnectedness highlights the need for a holistic approach to reporting, one that considers the broader context and interdependencies of environmental phenomena (Carvalho, 2010).

The role of citizen journalism in environmental reporting has grown significantly in recent years. Equipped with smartphones and social media, ordinary individuals can document and share environmental issues in real time, amplifying their voices and perspectives (Allan, 2017). While this democratization of reporting has its benefits, it also raises concerns about accuracy and accountability. Professional journalists play a crucial role in verifying and contextualizing citizen-generated content, ensuring that it meets the standards of credible journalism.

Advocacy journalism, which actively promotes environmental causes, is another emerging trend in the field. While traditional journalism emphasizes objectivity, advocacy journalism embraces a more activist stance, aiming to drive social and political change (McIntyre & Gyldensted, 2017). This approach can be particularly effective in mobilizing public support for environmental initiatives, although it also raises questions about bias and impartiality.

The impact of environmental reporting extends beyond individual awareness, influencing policy and corporate behavior. Investigative reports and exposés have prompted legislative changes, corporate reforms, and international agreements on environmental issues (Boykoff, 2011). By shining a spotlight on environmental challenges, journalists contribute to the broader goals of accountability and sustainability.

Environmental reporting also serves as a catalyst for community engagement and activism. By highlighting local issues and grassroots efforts, journalists can empower communities to take ownership of their environmental challenges and solutions (Hansen, 2018). This bottom-up approach complements top-down initiatives, creating a more comprehensive and inclusive framework for addressing environmental problems.

The future of environmental reporting was likely be shaped by technological advancements, including artificial intelligence, data visualization, and virtual reality. These tools have the potential to enhance storytelling and audience engagement, providing immersive and interactive

experiences (Allan, 2017). However, the ethical implications of such technologies must be carefully considered to ensure that they are used responsibly and effectively.

The environmental reporting is a vital component of modern journalism, addressing some of the most pressing challenges of our time. It requires a delicate balance of scientific rigor, ethical integrity, and creative storytelling to inform and inspire diverse audiences. Despite the numerous challenges it faces, environmental journalism continues to evolve and adapt, driven by the collective efforts of journalists, scientists, and communities worldwide. As the world grapples with the complexities of environmental change, the role of environmental reporting in fostering awareness, accountability, and action cannot be overstated.

The field of environmental reporting is increasingly significant in a world grappling with climate change, biodiversity loss, and other pressing ecological challenges. From a journalist's perspective, the process of reporting on environmental issues is shaped by numerous factors, including professional norms, societal expectations, resource availability, and political influences. These factors collectively influence the content, framing, and impact of environmental journalism, making it a critical area of inquiry in both media studies and environmental communication (Hansen, 2010). This introduction delves into the various dimensions that shape the practice of environmental reporting, offering a comprehensive exploration of the journalist's perspective.

One of the primary factors affecting environmental reporting is the complexity of environmental issues themselves. Topics such as climate change, deforestation, and ocean acidification often involve intricate scientific concepts that require specialized knowledge to interpret and communicate effectively. Journalists face the challenge of balancing accuracy with accessibility, ensuring that their reports are both scientifically credible and understandable to a broad audience (Boykoff, 2009). This tension underscores the importance of training and expertise in environmental journalism.

Resource constraints also play a significant role in shaping environmental reporting. Newsrooms with limited budgets and staff often struggle to allocate sufficient resources to cover environmental issues comprehensively. Investigative reporting, in particular, requires time and financial investment, which may not always align with the priorities of profit-driven media organizations (Friedman, 2015). These constraints can lead to superficial coverage, with journalists relying on press releases and secondary sources instead of conducting original investigations.

The influence of media ownership and corporate interests is another critical factor. Media outlets owned by corporations with vested interests in industries such as fossil fuels, agriculture, or mining may face pressure to downplay or omit stories that could harm their parent companies' reputations (McChesney, 2008). This dynamic raises ethical concerns about the independence and objectivity of environmental reporting, highlighting the need for transparency and accountability in media practices.

Political and regulatory environments also shape the landscape of environmental journalism. In some countries, restrictive laws and government censorship limit the ability of journalists to report on sensitive environmental issues. For example, reporting on pollution caused by state-owned industries or illegal logging operations may expose journalists to legal or physical risks (Morton et al., 2011). Conversely, supportive policies and press freedom can empower journalists to investigate and expose environmental injustices without fear of reprisal.

The role of advocacy in environmental reporting is a topic of ongoing debate among journalists and scholars. While some argue that journalists should maintain strict objectivity, others contend that advocacy is necessary in the face of urgent environmental crises (Ward, 2015). Advocacy-oriented reporting can raise awareness and mobilize public action, but it also risks alienating audiences who perceive it as biased or unbalanced. Striking the right balance between advocacy and impartiality is a key challenge for environmental journalists.

Public engagement and audience perceptions are also influential factors in environmental reporting. Research suggests that the way environmental issues are framed—whether as crises, opportunities, or moral imperatives—significantly affects how audiences respond (Nisbet, 2009). Journalists must navigate the delicate task of crafting narratives that resonate with diverse audiences while avoiding sensationalism or oversimplification. Audience feedback and social media metrics increasingly guide editorial decisions, further complicating the dynamics of environmental journalism.

Digital technology and new media platforms have transformed the practice of environmental reporting. The rise of online journalism and social media has democratized information dissemination, allowing journalists to reach global audiences and engage with readers in real-time (Hermida, 2012). However, the proliferation of digital content also poses challenges, such as information overload, competition for attention, and the spread of misinformation. Navigating this digital landscape requires journalists to adapt their skills and strategies continually.

The ethical dimensions of environmental reporting are another area of concern. Journalists must grapple with questions about their responsibilities to the public, the environment, and their profession. Ethical dilemmas often arise when reporting on controversial topics, such as the trade-offs between economic development and environmental conservation (Lewis & Cushion, 2009). Adhering to ethical standards is essential for maintaining credibility and trust, particularly in an era of growing skepticism toward the media.

Cultural and societal factors further influence environmental reporting. In some cultures, environmental issues may be deeply intertwined with religious beliefs, traditional practices, or community values. Journalists operating in such contexts must navigate these cultural nuances to produce reports that are both respectful and impactful (Finney, 2014). Understanding local contexts is crucial for crafting stories that resonate with specific audiences while addressing global environmental challenges.

Collaboration among journalists, scientists, and policymakers is increasingly recognized as a valuable approach to environmental reporting. By working together, these stakeholders can pool their expertise and resources to produce more accurate and impactful stories (Anderson, 2014). Collaborative efforts can also help bridge the gap between scientific research and public understanding, ensuring that environmental issues are communicated effectively to diverse audiences.

The role of education and training in shaping environmental journalism cannot be overstated. Many journalists lack the specialized knowledge required to cover complex environmental topics, leading to gaps in reporting quality (Hansen, 2010). Training programs, workshops, and academic courses focused on environmental journalism can equip journalists with the skills needed to navigate scientific data, conduct investigative reporting, and engage effectively with audiences. Continuous professional development is essential for staying abreast of emerging trends and technologies.

Risk and safety considerations are increasingly relevant in environmental reporting. Journalists covering environmental conflicts, such as land disputes or anti-mining protests, often face threats to their safety and well-being. Ensuring the protection of journalists is critical for enabling them to report on these issues without fear of retaliation (Peeples, 2011). Media organizations and advocacy groups play a vital role in providing support and resources to journalists operating in high-risk environments.

The framing of environmental issues as local, national, or global concerns is another factor that shapes reporting practices. While some journalists focus on localized stories that highlight the immediate impacts of environmental degradation, others adopt a broader perspective to explore systemic challenges and international dynamics (Cox, 2013). Striking the right balance between local relevance and global context is essential for producing comprehensive and engaging reports.

Economic considerations also influence environmental reporting. Journalists often face pressure to produce stories that attract advertisers and generate revenue, which can lead to sensationalism or a focus on less substantive topics. Alternative funding models, such as nonprofit journalism and crowdfunding, offer potential solutions to these challenges, enabling journalists to prioritize public interest over commercial gain (Deuze, 2007).

The representation of marginalized and underrepresented communities in environmental reporting is a critical issue. Studies show that mainstream media often neglects the voices of indigenous peoples, low-income communities, and other vulnerable groups disproportionately affected by environmental challenges (Finney, 2014). Amplifying these voices is essential for promoting environmental justice and fostering inclusive dialogue about sustainable development.

The practice of environmental reporting is shaped by a complex interplay of factors, ranging from professional norms and resource constraints to political influences and audience dynamics. Understanding these factors from a journalist's perspective is crucial for advancing the field and addressing the challenges of the 21st century. By fostering collaboration, investing in education, and advocating for ethical and inclusive practices, journalists can play a pivotal role in raising awareness and driving action on critical environmental issues.

Environmental journalism plays a crucial role in shaping public awareness and understanding of environmental issues. The decision-making process of journalists, especially in the context of environmental reporting, is influenced by a variety of factors. These factors can range from individual motivations to organizational constraints, and they significantly affect how environmental issues are covered, presented, and prioritized. Understanding these influences is essential for improving environmental journalism, ensuring it meets its potential as a tool for raising awareness, advocating for change, and driving public engagement in environmental conservation efforts.

Journalists' decisions when covering environmental stories are often guided by a combination of personal, professional, and organizational factors. At the individual level, personal

interest, values, and ethical considerations can heavily influence the way journalists approach environmental issues. For instance, a journalist with a strong personal interest in nature and environmental sustainability is more likely to prioritize environmental topics and approach them with a sense of advocacy. Studies have shown that journalists' backgrounds and values shape their reporting, especially on topics that require scientific knowledge and an understanding of complex environmental systems (Anderson, 2013). Environmental issues are often seen as highly specialized topics, and journalists who are personally invested in these topics may have an easier time interpreting and presenting them in a compelling way to the public (Tindall & Holthaus, 2015).

However, individual factors alone do not fully explain how environmental stories are covered. Routine-level factors also play a significant role in the decision-making process. Routine factors include the daily practices, time constraints, and editorial guidelines that shape a journalist's work. Environmental journalism, like other forms of reporting, must often conform to deadlines and the expectations of news organizations that prioritize stories with immediate news value or public interest (Cottle, 2009). Time constraints, particularly in fast-paced newsrooms, often mean that journalists are pressured to focus on breaking news rather than in-depth environmental investigations (Babcock, 2017). For example, environmental stories that require long-term monitoring or field research may be sidelined in favor of more urgent, time-sensitive issues like political scandals or economic crises.

Journalists' decisions are further influenced by the editorial policies of their news organizations. These policies can determine what types of stories are considered important and which ones are more likely to be published. News outlets, particularly those with limited resources, may prioritize stories that align with audience preferences, which can often exclude environmental issues unless they are tied to sensational events like natural disasters (Boykoff & Boykoff, 2004). In many cases, environmental stories are relegated to niche sections of newspapers or airwaves, with limited attention given to long-term environmental concerns that may not resonate immediately with the public (Anderson, 2013). As a result, even journalists who are motivated by a personal interest in environmental issues may face difficulties in pursuing these topics if their organizations do not consider them newsworthy or commercially viable.

Another critical influence on environmental reporting is the journalistic need to maintain objectivity and balance. Environmental journalism is often seen as both a form of education and

advocacy, and journalists are tasked with conveying the seriousness of environmental issues while remaining objective. However, this can be challenging when environmental issues are urgent, and the need for action is clear. Journalists must walk a fine line between providing accurate information and potentially advocating for change. According to a study by Caren & Gans (2006), journalists often face pressure to be impartial, even when covering issues like climate change, where the scientific consensus is strong but some political entities remain opposed to such views. This creates a tension between presenting the facts and taking an advocacy stance, which can complicate how environmental issues are framed in the media.

Corporate interests and government pressure also significantly shape environmental reporting. Environmental journalists often face external pressure from corporate entities that may want to downplay the environmental impact of their activities. A study by Hamilton (2004) highlights how corporations use their influence to prevent negative coverage of industries like mining, oil, and manufacturing, which are often responsible for significant environmental harm. Journalists working in such contexts may be reluctant to cover controversial environmental stories due to concerns over losing access to corporate sources or advertisers. Similarly, government agencies may exert pressure on journalists to avoid or censor stories that could expose environmental corruption or poor policymaking. In countries where environmental reporting is politically sensitive, such as Pakistan, journalists may face direct censorship or threats from powerful state actors (Sardar, 2019).

Routine-level factors also include the availability of resources for investigative reporting. Environmental stories, particularly those that require on-the-ground reporting, often demand substantial financial resources and time commitments. However, many newsrooms operate with limited budgets, and environmental journalism is often not prioritized due to the costs associated with traveling to remote areas or conducting in-depth field investigations (Cottle, 2009). As a result, environmental stories may rely heavily on secondary sources, such as press releases or reports from environmental organizations, rather than original reporting from the field. This can limit the depth of coverage and reduce the ability of journalists to uncover critical environmental issues that may otherwise go unnoticed.

The role of audience demand is another important routine-level factor. Journalists are often influenced by the interests and expectations of their audience, which can affect the kinds of stories that are covered. If the public shows little interest in environmental issues, news outlets may be

less inclined to cover them unless they are tied to a current event or disaster. Boykoff and Boykoff (2004) argue that the media's tendency to sensationalize certain environmental events, such as oil spills or natural disasters, is partly driven by audience interest in dramatic stories. However, this can lead to an incomplete picture of environmental issues, with long-term, systemic problems like climate change receiving less attention compared to immediate, crisis-driven events.

Moreover, technological advancements and the rise of social media have added another layer of complexity to environmental reporting. Social media platforms have given journalists direct access to their audience, enabling them to gauge public interest and tailor their coverage accordingly. While this can provide valuable feedback, it can also create pressure to cover stories that are more likely to generate clicks or shares rather than stories that are essential for public understanding of environmental challenges (Tindall & Holthaus, 2015). In this context, journalists may prioritize stories that align with trending topics or viral issues, potentially at the expense of more important but less popular environmental concerns.

At the organizational level, the availability of training and professional development opportunities also influences journalists' ability to cover environmental issues effectively. Environmental journalism often requires specialized knowledge of science, policy, and ecosystems, yet many journalists lack formal training in these areas. Without proper training, journalists may struggle to understand the complexities of environmental issues, resulting in oversimplified or inaccurate reporting. As Anderson (2013) notes, journalists without environmental expertise may rely on experts or activists for guidance, but this can introduce bias or result in shallow coverage. Training programs focused on environmental issues can help journalists improve their knowledge and reporting skills, enabling them to better communicate the importance of environmental sustainability to the public.

Finally, ethical considerations also play a crucial role in environmental journalism. Journalists are expected to uphold principles of fairness, accuracy, and objectivity, but when it comes to environmental issues, these principles are often challenged. Environmental reporting requires journalists to navigate the complexities of scientific data, which can sometimes be contradictory or difficult to interpret. Moreover, the urgency of some environmental issues, such as climate change, can create ethical dilemmas, as journalists may feel compelled to advocate for action while still adhering to their professional standards (Cottle, 2009). Balancing these

competing demands can be difficult, particularly in a media landscape where sensationalism and entertainment-driven coverage often overshadow more nuanced, fact-based reporting.

The decisions made by journalists when covering environmental issues are shaped by a complex interplay of individual, routine, and organizational factors. Personal motivations, such as a passion for environmental sustainability, can influence journalists' choices, but they must also contend with external pressures, time constraints, financial limitations, and audience demand. Additionally, ethical considerations and the availability of resources and training play significant roles in determining how environmental stories are reported. Understanding these factors can help identify the challenges and opportunities within environmental journalism, ultimately leading to more effective coverage of environmental issues that better informs the public and advocates for meaningful change.

Many media research studies have highlighted the limited geographical scope in which third-world countries observe and address the climate change scenario. A study conducted across 27 countries examined how different nations prioritize climate change and the role their state or private media play in raising awareness about it. This study included countries committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions under the Kyoto Protocol, such as Germany, as well as countries that are heavily impacted by the consequences of climate change, such as India.

The role of organizational-level policies in shaping the coverage of environmental issues in the media is a crucial component in understanding how environmental journalism functions. News organizations, whether they are print, broadcast, or digital outlets, play a significant role in determining which environmental issues receive attention and how these issues are framed. Organizational policies, such as editorial guidelines, resource allocation, and strategic decisions about content, are essential in influencing the scope and nature of environmental reporting. These policies reflect the priorities, values, and operational constraints of news organizations, all of which impact journalists' ability to cover environmental issues comprehensively.

News outlets make decisions about which topics to cover based on a variety of factors, including audience interests, market forces, political affiliations, and commercial considerations. The prioritization of environmental issues often depends on these factors, which can result in certain stories being overlooked or underreported. Environmental journalism is frequently seen as a niche beat compared to other topics such as politics, economics, or entertainment, and thus may not receive the same level of attention or resources within the newsroom (Cottle, 2009). This

marginalization of environmental issues can limit the public's exposure to important stories about climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss, which are critical to global sustainability.

One key factor that influences organizational policies is the perceived newsworthiness of environmental stories. News outlets tend to prioritize stories that have immediate relevance or are likely to attract large audiences. The salience of environmental issues is often driven by visible events, such as natural disasters, oil spills, or other crises. These events are deemed "breaking news" and receive extensive coverage because they generate significant public interest. However, ongoing environmental problems such as climate change, deforestation, and pollution may not garner the same level of attention unless they are linked to a specific crisis or catastrophe. As a result, news organizations may prioritize short-term, dramatic stories over long-term, systemic issues that require sustained attention and in-depth analysis (Boykoff & Boykoff, 2004).

The editorial policies of a news organization also determine the tone and framing of environmental stories. Editors play a critical role in deciding how environmental issues are presented to the public, whether through an investigative approach, human interest angle, or scientific perspective. For example, some news outlets may frame environmental issues as a crisis in need of urgent action, while others may downplay the severity of the problem or focus on more optimistic solutions (Anderson, 2013). These editorial decisions reflect the values and ideological leanings of the media outlet, which can have a significant impact on public perception of environmental issues. Media outlets that have a conservative or business-friendly editorial stance may be more likely to downplay the urgency of environmental problems, while more progressive outlets may highlight the need for systemic change and policy interventions.

The allocation of resources is another critical aspect of organizational policies that influence environmental reporting. Environmental journalism often requires specialized knowledge and significant resources, including access to scientific data, field reporting, and travel to remote locations to cover environmental issues comprehensively. However, many news organizations face financial constraints and may not allocate sufficient resources to environmental reporting. Investigative environmental journalism, in particular, can be resource-intensive and time-consuming, requiring reporters to conduct extensive research, interviews, and fact-checking. In the face of financial pressures, news organizations may prioritize other types of stories that are perceived as more commercially viable or easier to cover within tight time frames (Babcock, 2017).

In many cases, the lack of resources for environmental reporting results in a reliance on pre-packaged content, such as press releases, reports from environmental organizations, or corporate communications. While these sources can provide valuable information, they may also introduce bias or limit the scope of environmental reporting. Journalists may be less inclined to question or investigate these sources due to time constraints or a lack of alternative resources. This reliance on secondary sources can result in superficial reporting that fails to uncover critical environmental issues or provide a nuanced understanding of complex environmental challenges (Cottle, 2009). Moreover, the dominance of corporate-sponsored content in media outlets may further influence the framing of environmental issues, particularly when corporations are major advertisers or sponsors of news organizations.

The role of political and corporate influences in shaping environmental reporting cannot be overstated. Many news organizations rely on advertising revenue from large corporations, including those in industries with significant environmental footprints, such as oil, gas, and manufacturing. This reliance on corporate funding can create conflicts of interest and pressure journalists to avoid reporting on certain environmental issues that might alienate advertisers or business partners. In some cases, media outlets may engage in self-censorship to avoid angering powerful stakeholders (Hamilton, 2004). Political factors also play a role in determining the coverage of environmental issues. News organizations may be influenced by government policies, especially when they rely on government funding or access to political sources. This can lead to biased coverage, with environmental issues either downplayed or framed in a way that aligns with government interests (Sardar, 2019).

The influence of organizational-level policies on environmental reporting also extends to the training and professional development opportunities provided to journalists. In many newsrooms, environmental journalism is not seen as a priority for professional development, and journalists may lack the specialized training required to cover complex environmental issues effectively. Without a solid understanding of environmental science, policy, and the social implications of environmental change, journalists may struggle to report on these topics in a way that is both accurate and accessible to the public (Tindall & Holthaus, 2015). News organizations that do not prioritize environmental training or provide journalists with the necessary resources and support may inadvertently contribute to a lack of expertise in environmental reporting, which can further undermine the quality and impact of environmental coverage.

The organizational structure of a news outlet also plays a role in how environmental issues are covered. In some organizations, environmental stories may be assigned to specific reporters or departments, while in others, environmental issues may be treated as part of a broader category such as science, health, or politics. The way environmental stories are categorized and assigned can impact their visibility within the newsroom and their perceived importance. If environmental stories are relegated to a less prominent section or are not prioritized by senior editors, they may not receive the same level of attention or resources as other types of stories (Cottle, 2009). This structural arrangement can contribute to the underreporting of environmental issues and limit the diversity of perspectives and expertise within the coverage.

One of the most significant organizational-level factors influencing environmental journalism is the commercialization of the media industry. In the digital age, news organizations are increasingly driven by audience metrics, including page views, clicks, and social media engagement. Stories that generate the most attention are prioritized, often at the expense of in-depth or investigative reporting. Environmental issues are perceived as less "marketable" or less likely to generate viral content may be given lower priority in favor of sensational stories or entertainment-driven news. This market-driven model of journalism, which prioritizes short-term audience engagement over long-term informational value, poses a challenge for environmental journalism, which often requires sustained attention and a more nuanced approach (Boykoff & Boykoff, 2004).

Social media has introduced new dynamics to the way environmental issues are reported and consumed. News organizations are increasingly dependent on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to distribute their content and engage with audiences. While social media provides opportunities for greater public engagement and awareness of environmental issues, it also encourages the sensationalization of news. Stories that attract high engagement on social media platforms are more likely to be prioritized, even if they are less substantive or do not address systemic environmental problems. The viral nature of social media can contribute to the spread of misinformation or oversimplified narratives about environmental issues, which can undermine the public's understanding of the complexity and urgency of environmental challenges (Tindall & Holthaus, 2015).

As the media landscape continues to evolve, news organizations must adapt their policies to reflect the growing importance of environmental issues. The increasing frequency and severity of

environmental crises, such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, make it imperative for news organizations to prioritize environmental reporting. This may involve reallocating resources, investing in specialized training, and restructuring editorial policies to ensure that environmental issues receive the attention they deserve. In particular, news organizations must recognize the long-term value of environmental reporting and prioritize it over sensational or short-term stories that may capture more immediate public interest but fail to address the root causes of environmental degradation (Anderson, 2013).

Moreover, journalists working in organizations with robust editorial support and a clear commitment to environmental issues are more likely to produce high-quality environmental journalism. These organizations provide journalists with the time, resources, and training needed to investigate complex environmental issues, as well as the editorial independence to report on controversial or politically sensitive topics. By fostering an environment where environmental journalism is seen as a key priority, news organizations can contribute to a more informed public discourse and inspire action on critical environmental issues (Babcock, 2017).

The organizational-level policies play a fundamental role in shaping how environmental issues are covered in the media. News outlets that prioritize environmental issues, provide adequate resources, and ensure editorial independence are more likely to produce impactful environmental journalism. Conversely, news organizations that are driven by commercial interests, political affiliations, or financial constraints may contribute to the underreporting or distortion of environmental issues. As environmental challenges continue to escalate, it is essential for news organizations to reassess their policies and commit to providing comprehensive, accurate, and unbiased coverage of environmental issues that affect the global community.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Environmental issues are very extensive and collide with every characteristic of life. No one is unaltered by the force of full contact with environmental problems. Pakistan is among the most vulnerable countries list. Pakistan is badly suffered from climate change in recent past the flood is a prior example of this. Media has the key role in educating the audiences regarding this sever environmental issue. But there is no space in media for environmental related issues and problems. So in this Research, I was try to find out the factors affecting the environmental reporting.

### **1.3 Significant of the Study**

This study is more important because every individual life is attached to environmental issues. Pakistan's agriculture accounted for about 18.9% of Pakistan's GDP, floods, Underground water resources, and many other issues related to climate change. If we had these issues in discourse and discussion, government-level planning, and media reports, the audience was having better understanding of environmental issues and problems.

### **1.4 Research Objectives**

- ✓ To find out the main factors/ individual factors/ routine level factors that influence journalist decisions while covering environmental issues.
- ✓ To investigate the role of organizational policies regarding environmental issues, news and stories
- ✓ To investigate that Journalist had enough knowledge about environmental reporting

### **1.5 Research Questions**

**RQ.1** what are the main factors/ individual factors/ routine level factors that influence journalist decisions while covering environmental issues?

**RQ.2** what is the role of organizational level policies regarding environmental issues, news and stories?

**RQ.3** Journalist had enough knowledge about environmental reporting?

## 2. 0 LITERATURE REVIEW

To constructively and meaningfully report on issues relating to climate change in news media, several problems have been identified that need to be sorted out. First, climate change forecasts about the hazardous effects in future. Media on the other hand, is interested in the present. Most of the stories on climate change usually do not find appropriate space because journalists cannot be easily satisfied about the imminent threats. To be covered, issues relating to climate change have to be made visible and manifest for journalists (Cottle, 2009). Secondly, news media usually focus on the cause effect issue.

However, it is not easy to decipher the causes-effect debate on the climate change crisis. Journalists usually misreport or do not report on an issue if they found it difficult to understand (Schudson, 1995). Thirdly, news media is mainly concerned with the fast and furious world while on the other hand; the climate change process is a complex and time-based. For better and constructive reporting of climate change crisis, journalists have to be provided bits of information from the larger chunks to disseminate it to the audiences. This would also help storing manageable and consumable information in the collective memories of the people (Teneboim-Weinblatt et al., 2015). Fourth, news media apply different strategies for national and international news stories that often collide with the single but consistent interpretation of events in the environmental protections debates.

Huma (2018) indicated that most of the reporters have required the theme of environment and climate change knowledge about embarrassment of indefinite stories. One consequence of this journalistic convention is that issues of national importance get more prominence and frequently reported than international issues. Fifth, to make stories about the climate change crisis more relevant in media, information about the climate change has to be located in the realm of media events (Cottle, 2009). An event would qualify to be treated as newsworthy news story if it is attributed to officials, made context free and easily comprehended by the journalists. This may not be very feasible for climate change literature that calls for more social, political and scientific contexts to understand the horrors of environmental degradations (Street, 2005).

Environmental reporting has been a subject of extensive scholarly inquiry, reflecting its significance in fostering environmental awareness, accountability, and action. This literature review synthesizes research on various dimensions of environmental reporting, including its historical development, methodologies, challenges, and impacts on public discourse and policy-

making. The scope of environmental journalism has evolved considerably over time, with researchers examining its intersections with media studies, environmental science, and communication theory (Lester, 2010). This review aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the field, highlighting key findings and identifying areas for future research.

The historical development of environmental reporting is a prominent theme in the literature. Early studies trace its roots to conservation journalism, which emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Cox, 2013). This period marked the beginning of media coverage on deforestation, wildlife protection, and pollution. Scholars note that environmental reporting gained significant momentum during the 1960s and 1970s, driven by environmental crises and the rise of the environmental movement. Pioneering works such as Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962) inspired journalists to delve into environmental issues, setting the stage for the modern era of environmental journalism (Friedman, 2015).

Methodological approaches to environmental reporting have been a focal point of academic inquiry. Researchers emphasize the importance of data-driven journalism, highlighting the role of quantitative and qualitative methods in analyzing environmental phenomena (Anderson, 2014). Content analysis is widely employed to assess media representations of environmental issues, examining factors such as framing, tone, and narrative structures. Other studies utilize ethnographic methods to explore the experiences and practices of environmental journalists, shedding light on the challenges they face in sourcing and reporting accurate information (Peeples, 2011).

Framing theory is a central concept in the study of environmental reporting. Scholars argue that the framing of environmental issues influences public perceptions and policy responses (Nisbet, 2009). For instance, research indicates that framing climate change as a scientific rather than a political issue enhances public understanding and reduces partisan polarization (Hart & Nisbet, 2012). Similarly, studies show that framing biodiversity loss in economic terms can motivate stakeholders to adopt conservation measures. The role of media frames in shaping environmental discourse underscores the power of journalism in driving societal change.

The intersection of environmental reporting and risk communication is another key area of research. Scholars explore how journalists convey the risks associated with environmental issues, such as climate change, natural disasters, and industrial accidents (Kasperson et al., 2003). Effective risk communication requires clarity, transparency, and sensitivity to audience concerns.

However, studies reveal that sensationalism and misinformation often undermine public trust in environmental reporting (Morton et al., 2011). This finding highlights the need for ethical standards and rigorous fact-checking in environmental journalism.

Digital media has revolutionized environmental reporting, offering new opportunities and challenges for journalists. Online platforms enable real-time updates, interactive storytelling, and global reach, transforming how environmental issues are communicated (Deuze, 2007). Social media, in particular, has emerged as a powerful tool for environmental advocacy, allowing activists and organizations to bypass traditional media gatekeepers. However, researchers caution that the proliferation of digital content can exacerbate information overload and reduce the visibility of credible sources (Hermida, 2012). The implications of digital media for environmental reporting warrant further investigation.

Environmental reporting often intersects with advocacy journalism, which seeks to promote environmental causes and influence public opinion. Scholars debate the ethical implications of advocacy journalism, questioning whether it compromises journalistic objectivity (Ward, 2015). Proponents argue that advocacy is justified in the context of environmental crises, where urgent action is required to address existential threats. Critics, however, warn that overt advocacy can alienate audiences and undermine the credibility of journalism. This debate highlights the tensions between activism and professionalism in environmental reporting.

The representation of marginalized communities in environmental reporting is a critical issue in the literature. Studies reveal that mainstream media often neglects the voices and perspectives of indigenous peoples, low-income communities, and other vulnerable groups disproportionately affected by environmental degradation (Finney, 2014). Researchers advocate for inclusive reporting practices that amplify these voices, emphasizing their importance in achieving environmental justice. By incorporating diverse perspectives, journalists can provide a more comprehensive and equitable portrayal of environmental issues.

Media ownership and corporate influence are significant factors shaping environmental reporting. Scholars argue that concentration of media ownership and reliance on advertising revenue creates conflicts of interest, limiting the scope and depth of environmental coverage (McChesney, 2008). For example, studies show that media outlets owned by fossil fuel companies are less likely to report on climate change or critique industry practices. These findings underscore the need for independent journalism and alternative funding models to ensure unbiased reporting.

The role of environmental reporting in policy-making has been extensively studied. Research demonstrates that investigative journalism can expose environmental crimes, influence public opinion, and catalyze legislative reforms (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012). Case studies highlight the impact of high-profile reports on issues such as deforestation, oil spills, and wildlife trafficking. However, scholars note that the effectiveness of environmental journalism in shaping policy depends on factors such as political will, public pressure, and media credibility.

Education and training are essential for advancing environmental reporting. Studies identify a lack of specialized knowledge and skills among journalists as a barrier to effective coverage of complex environmental issues (Hansen, 2010). Training programs, workshops, and academic curricula in environmental journalism can address this gap, equipping reporters with the tools needed to navigate scientific jargon, interpret data, and communicate effectively with diverse audiences. Ongoing professional development is also crucial in keeping pace with emerging environmental trends and technologies.

Audience engagement is a growing area of interest in environmental reporting research. Scholars examine how different media formats, styles, and platforms influence audience reception and behavior (Meijer, 2013). Interactive and participatory approaches, such as citizen journalism and crowd sourced investigations, have been shown to enhance public involvement in environmental issues. However, researchers caution that audience engagement should not come at the expense of journalistic rigor and credibility.

The impact of environmental reporting on individual and collective action is a recurring theme in the literature. The studies show the exposure to environmental news can increase awareness, shift attitudes, and motivate pro-environmental behaviors (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002). However, the relationship between media consumption and behavior change is complex, influenced by factors such as values, norms, and socio-economic conditions. Researchers emphasize the importance of nuanced storytelling that connects environmental issues to audiences' lived experiences and aspirations.

The challenges facing environmental reporting are well-documented in the literature. Financial constraints, political interference, and safety risks are among the obstacles journalists encounter in covering environmental issues (Lewis & Cushion, 2009). These challenges are particularly acute in developing countries, where media resources and press freedom are often

limited. Addressing these barriers requires concerted efforts from media organizations, civil society, and governments to support and protect environmental journalism.

The literature on environmental reporting offers valuable insights into its evolution, methodologies, challenges, and impacts. While the field has made significant strides in advancing public understanding and accountability, it continues to grapple with ethical dilemmas, resource constraints, and shifting media landscapes. Future research should explore innovative approaches to environmental journalism, leveraging technology, collaboration, and inclusivity to address the complex and interconnected challenges of the 21st century.

The literature on factors affecting environmental reporting from a journalist's perspective is extensive, encompassing themes such as the role of professional ethics, organizational constraints, audience dynamics, and technological advancements. These factors collectively influence how journalists engage with environmental issues, shaping the content and impact of their reporting. This literature review delves into these dimensions, drawing on diverse studies to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities in environmental journalism.

One significant factor is the ethical responsibility of journalists to report accurately and fairly on environmental issues. Ethics play a crucial role in determining the credibility and reliability of environmental journalism. Journalists often navigate ethical dilemmas, such as balancing objectivity with advocacy, particularly when reporting on urgent environmental crises (Wilkins & Patterson, 2016). Ethical training and frameworks can provide guidance for journalists grappling with these challenges.

Organizational constraints, including resource limitations, editorial priorities, and ownership structures, are another critical factor. Research highlights that budget cuts in newsrooms and the prioritization of profit over public interest often lead to reduced coverage of complex environmental issues (Hanusch, 2013). These constraints can result in superficial reporting, with journalists relying on press releases and pre-packaged content instead of conducting in-depth investigations.

The influence of media ownership and corporate interests has been widely discussed in the literature. Media organizations with ties to industries such as fossil fuels, mining, or agriculture may face conflicts of interest when covering environmental issues. Such dynamics can lead to biased reporting or the omission of critical stories that challenge powerful corporate entities

(Pickering, 2020). Independent and nonprofit media outlets are often better positioned to produce unbiased environmental journalism.

Audience dynamics also play a crucial role in shaping environmental reporting. Studies show that audience preferences, perceptions, and engagement levels significantly influence the framing and content of environmental stories (Anderson, 2019). Journalists must balance the need to inform and educate audiences with the imperative to maintain their interest and engagement. This often leads to the use of human-interest angles and compelling narratives to make complex issues relatable.

The role of technology in environmental reporting is another area of focus in the literature. The rise of digital media and social platforms has transformed how journalists report on and disseminate environmental stories. Online platforms offer opportunities for real-time reporting, audience interaction, and the use of multimedia tools to enhance storytelling (Hermida, 2015). However, they also present challenges, such as the spread of misinformation and the difficulty of verifying sources in the digital age.

The importance of collaboration between journalists, scientists, and policymakers is a recurring theme in the literature. Collaborative approaches enable journalists to access credible information and present complex scientific findings accurately. Research suggests that such partnerships can enhance the quality and impact of environmental reporting, fostering greater public understanding and engagement (Goodman & Barnes, 2018).

Cultural and societal factors also influence environmental reporting. In diverse cultural contexts, environmental issues may be perceived differently, shaping how journalists approach their stories. For instance, in some societies, environmental degradation is closely tied to religious or traditional beliefs, requiring journalists to navigate these sensitivities thoughtfully (Shanahan, 2016). Understanding these cultural dimensions is essential for producing impactful and contextually relevant reports.

The framing of environmental issues is another critical area explored in the literature. Studies highlight that the way stories are framed—as crises, opportunities, or moral imperatives—significantly affects audience perception and policy outcomes (Nisbet, 2010). Journalists play a pivotal role in shaping these narratives, influencing how environmental issues are understood and addressed by the public.

Training and professional development for environmental journalists are frequently emphasized in the literature. Many journalists lack the specialized knowledge required to cover complex environmental topics effectively. Training programs, workshops, and academic courses can equip journalists with the skills needed to interpret scientific data, conduct investigative reporting, and engage diverse audiences (Russell, 2017). Continuous learning is essential for adapting to the evolving demands of the field.

The representation of marginalized communities in environmental reporting is a growing area of interest. Studies indicate that mainstream media often overlooks the voices of indigenous peoples, low-income populations, and other vulnerable groups disproportionately affected by environmental challenges (Whyte, 2018). Amplifying these voices is critical for promoting environmental justice and ensuring inclusive coverage of environmental issues.

Risk and safety considerations for journalists covering environmental issues are another important factor. Reporting on environmental conflicts, such as land disputes or anti-mining protests, often exposes journalists to threats and violence. Ensuring the safety and protection of journalists is vital for enabling them to report on these issues without fear of retaliation (Peeples, 2014). Media organizations and advocacy groups play a crucial role in providing support and resources.

The economic pressures faced by journalists are extensively discussed in the literature. The commercial nature of mainstream media often prioritizes stories that attract advertisers and generate revenue, potentially sidelining in-depth environmental reporting. Alternative funding models, such as nonprofit journalism and crowdfunding, are proposed as solutions to these challenges, enabling journalists to focus on public interest stories (Franklin, 2015).

The impact of advocacy in environmental reporting is a topic of debate among scholars. While some argue that journalists should maintain objectivity, others contend that advocacy is necessary to address urgent environmental issues (Cox, 2013). Advocacy-oriented reporting can raise awareness and inspire action but may also risk being perceived as biased or partisan.

Audience trust and media credibility are recurring themes in the literature. Public skepticism toward media institutions can undermine the impact of environmental journalism. Studies emphasize the importance of transparency, accuracy, and ethical practices in building and maintaining audience trust (Singer, 2016). Journalists must navigate these challenges carefully to ensure the effectiveness of their reporting.

The literature also explores the role of environmental journalism in shaping public policy and discourse. By highlighting pressing environmental issues and holding powerful actors accountable, journalists can influence policy decisions and public opinion. However, the extent of this influence often depends on the quality and reach of the reporting (Boykoff, 2009).

The intersection of environmental journalism and science communication is another critical area of study. Journalists act as intermediaries between scientists and the public, translating complex scientific findings into accessible narratives. Effective communication requires journalists to build trust with scientific communities while maintaining their independence (Bruggemann & Engesser, 2014).

The literature on factors affecting environmental reporting from a journalist's perspective highlights the multifaceted challenges and opportunities in the field. From ethical considerations and resource constraints to audience dynamics and technological advancements, these factors shape how journalists engage with environmental issues. Addressing these challenges requires a collaborative, inclusive, and adaptive approach, enabling journalists to contribute meaningfully to the global discourse on environmental sustainability.

Researchers like (Carvalho, 2007; Cottle, 2009; Hussain and Lynch, 2015) who have investigated the political and economic orientations of media industries fear that the corporate logic of media goes against the guidelines set by the environmentalists. Media industries promote the commercial interests of corporate sector and encourage consumerism and materialism. But this argument is not supported by all researchers who have pointed to the increasing popularity of environment-friendly initiatives by many manufacturers. These manufacturers sensitized by the popular demands for green technology are very much visible in the media. The theoreticians and environmentalists need to study these claims and counter-claims to better analyze and strategize communication on climate change.

News stories about disasters such as floods, tornadoes, and earthquakes, and their impacts on lives and infrastructure, have always received media coverage. In fact, the relationship between media, technology, and crises is not new. Cottle (2014) highlights that the connection between news and disasters dates back centuries, he argues, "From the invention of the printing press in 15th-century England, to the development of postal services in the 17th century, to the creation of rail and telegraph networks in the 19th century, and Marconi's radio experiments in the late 1800s, all of these innovations progressively increased the speed and reach by which catastrophic events

could be communicated.” However, environmental degradation and climate change have only recently gained recognition and become part of the media agenda in the Western world (Olausson, 2009).

Researchers (Carvalho, 2007; Cottle, 2006) have identified various issues for this change in the media agenda like the increased international advocacy for creating awareness among the people, role of the UN, efforts of celebrities like Al Gore and the increased academic interest in the field. Though news media in certain nonWestern countries like China, Brazil, Malaysia have also started treating the climate change crisis as important issue, news media in most of the countries in the Asian and African continents have yet to realize the enormity of the problem though they happen to be the worst sufferers (Smith, 2005). The situation in Pakistan is not very encouraging. Pakistani news media usually ignore the severity of this threat and even the limited amount of coverage is dramatic and based on novelty.

Researchers like Ereaut and Stiguet (2006) and Lowe (2016) have found that the traditional media usually produce highly fearful messages while reporting on climate change crisis. They believe the ‘doom scenario’ presented by news media is due to the market forces to attract large audiences by producing more sensational and dramatic content. But the overdose of fear may not be very conducive for positive attitude change and overemphasis on catastrophe may lead to paralysis (Cottle and Nolan, 2007).

In fact studies on psychological reactions to media content have shown that people reject excessively frightful messages (Baran and Davis, 2021). They start considering it unreal and if these messages are repeated frequently, the fear messages are actively mediated and lose the fearful characteristics. Likewise, studies have shown that excessive frightening messages produce pessimism among the people and they are convinced that nothing can be done about the malaise. According to Carvalho (2007), in such a scenario, people usually adopt reactive behaviors and ‘instead of following advice to cut down emissions, they may start buying more refrigerators to save themselves against the predicted heat waves.

Another point of concern is the media bias toward the political rhetoric against the scientific rationale to explain the often-complex phenomenon of climate change (Lowe, 2016; Carvalho, 2007). While academic scholars are divided on the relative efficacy of climate change. Communication, there is a need to study the effects in political and economic contexts. In this regard, the theories relating to the press-politics interaction (Entman, 1990; Olausson, 2009;

Carvalho, 2007; Cottle, 2006) could be helpful to produce more effective communication in the Pakistani context.

Climate journalism is a vital field of study because of the significant impact climate change has on human life. Research indicates that most people's understanding of climate change comes from news media coverage (Schäfer and Painter, 2020). Mainstream media play a key role in shaping public policies on climate change, increasing awareness of its effects, and educating and engaging the public on global warming (Boykoff, 2011; Cheng and Gonzalez Ramirez, 2020; Comfort, Tandoc, and Gruszczynski, 2020). This growing influence has led to the development of climate journalism, which Schäfer and Painter (2020) define as collecting, analyzing, and presenting information about climate change—its causes, effects, and solutions—through media to both general and specialized audiences.

A study by Sharif and Medvecky (2018) highlights the lack of research on climate journalism in Pakistan. They found that journalists face various challenges, including political, economic, socio-cultural, and technological barriers, which may explain why climate journalism has not yet gained mainstream attention in the country. These findings show that multiple factors influence how journalists in the Global South report on climate issues. However, in Pakistan, there is still limited understanding of the nature and extent of the hierarchical influences affecting climate journalism.

The importance of factors affecting environmental reporting from a journalist's perspective is a multifaceted issue that has gained increasing attention in recent years. Environmental reporting plays a critical role in raising public awareness of pressing environmental challenges, informing policy debates, and advocating for sustainable practices. However, environmental journalists often face a range of challenges that influence how they report on environmental issues, including personal factors, ethical dilemmas, organizational constraints, and external pressures from political and corporate entities. Understanding the factors that shape environmental reporting is crucial for improving the quality and effectiveness of environmental journalism, which is essential for addressing the global environmental crisis.

The role of individual journalists' perspectives in environmental reporting is central to shaping how environmental issues are presented to the public. Journalists bring their personal interests, experiences, and values to their work, which can influence their decisions on which stories to cover and how to frame them. In the context of environmental journalism, personal

motivation and passion for environmental issues are significant driving factors. Many environmental journalists are motivated by a personal connection to nature or have witnessed firsthand the negative impacts of environmental degradation in their communities (Cottle, 2009). These personal experiences often inspire journalists to pursue environmental reporting as a career and to use their platform to raise awareness about critical environmental issues.

Journalists' educational backgrounds and expertise in environmental science also influence how they approach environmental stories. A solid understanding of environmental issues, scientific principles, and the social implications of environmental change allows journalists to cover complex topics in a manner that is both accurate and accessible to the public (Tindall & Holthaus, 2015). However, environmental journalism is a specialized field, and many journalists may not have received formal training in environmental science. This lack of expertise can make it difficult for journalists to report on technical environmental topics effectively, potentially leading to oversimplified or inaccurate reporting (Boykoff & Boykoff, 2004). Furthermore, the fast-paced nature of newsrooms can limit journalists' ability to conduct thorough research or engage in in-depth reporting on environmental issues.

Ethical considerations are another important factor that affects environmental reporting. Environmental journalists are often tasked with balancing objectivity and advocacy when covering environmental issues. On one hand, they must provide accurate, unbiased information based on scientific evidence, while on the other hand, they may feel a moral responsibility to advocate for environmental protection and social change (Anderson, 2013). This tension between neutrality and activism is a common challenge in environmental journalism, as the urgency of environmental crises often calls for immediate action. Journalists may struggle with how to maintain journalistic integrity while addressing issues that require urgent intervention, such as climate change or pollution (Babcock, 2017).

The presence of external pressures, including political and corporate influences, is another critical factor that affects environmental reporting. In many cases, journalists face pressure from government agencies, corporations, and other powerful stakeholders who seek to influence the narrative around environmental issues. Governments, for example, may discourage the reporting of environmentally harmful practices or attempt to control the flow of information about controversial environmental policies (Sardar, 2019). Similarly, corporations, especially those involved in industries with significant environmental impacts, may exert pressure on journalists to downplay or

avoid coverage of topics that could harm their public image (Hamilton, 2004). These external pressures can compromise the independence and integrity of environmental journalism, limiting the ability of journalists to report on environmental issues transparently and comprehensively.

Organizational policies also play a significant role in shaping environmental reporting. News organizations make editorial decisions that affect how environmental issues are covered, often based on financial considerations and audience interests. The market-driven nature of the media industry means that stories are often prioritized based on their potential to attract viewers, clicks, or advertising revenue (Cottle, 2009). Environmental issues, which may not always generate the same level of public interest as more sensational topics, are often relegated to the sidelines in favor of stories that are perceived as more commercially viable. This prioritization of profit over public service can result in the underreporting of environmental issues and limit the public's exposure to critical environmental information.

Another organizational factor influencing environmental reporting is the allocation of resources. Environmental journalism requires specialized knowledge, research, and fieldwork, all of which require adequate funding and time. However, many news organizations operate under tight financial constraints and may not allocate sufficient resources to environmental reporting. Investigative environmental journalism which often involves traveling to remote locations, interviewing experts, and analyzing complex data, is particularly resource-intensive and can be costly for news organizations (Tindall & Holthaus, 2015). Without adequate support, journalists may be unable to cover environmental issues in depth, resulting in superficial reporting that fails to capture the complexity of the issues at hand.

Training and professional development are also important factors that influence environmental reporting. Journalists who lack specialized training in environmental science may find it difficult to navigate the complexities of environmental issues. Professional development opportunities, such as workshops, seminars, and fellowships, can help journalists develop the knowledge and skills needed to cover environmental topics effectively. However, training opportunities in environmental journalism are often limited, particularly in regions where environmental issues are not seen as a priority (Babcock, 2017). As a result, many journalists may lack the tools they need to report on environmental issues accurately, which can undermine the quality of environmental journalism.

The increasing role of digital media and social media platforms in the dissemination of news has further complicated the landscape of environmental reporting. The rise of online news outlets and social media platforms has created new opportunities for environmental journalists to reach audiences and engage with the public. However, the digital media landscape is also characterized by the rapid spread of misinformation and sensationalism, which can distort public understanding of environmental issues. Social media platforms, in particular, tend to prioritize content that generates high engagement, such as viral videos or sensational headlines, which may not always reflect the complexity or importance of environmental issues (Boykoff & Boykoff, 2004). This trend can contribute to the trivialization of environmental reporting and undermine the public's ability to make informed decisions about environmental policies and practices.

The framing of environmental issues is another important aspect of environmental reporting. The way in which journalists frame environmental stories can significantly influence public perception of environmental problems and potential solutions. Environmental issues can be framed in various ways, such as crises that require immediate action, opportunities for innovation and technological solutions, or challenges that involve trade-offs between economic growth and environmental protection (Anderson, 2013).

The framing of environmental stories often reflects the ideological stance of the media outlet, with some outlets focusing on the urgency of environmental problems and others emphasizing the economic or political challenges associated with addressing these issues. The framing of environmental issues can shape public attitudes and influence policy debates, making it a key factor in the effectiveness of environmental journalism.

Public engagement with environmental issues is also influenced by how these issues are reported in the media. Environmental journalism serves as a bridge between scientific knowledge and public understanding, helping to translate complex scientific concepts into accessible narratives that can resonate with audiences (Cottle, 2009). Journalists who are able to effectively communicate the significance of environmental problems and their potential impact on communities can inspire public action and contribute to a broader environmental consciousness. Conversely, poorly framed or superficial reporting can lead to confusion or apathy, undermining efforts to engage the public in environmental advocacy and policy change.

One of the key challenges in environmental reporting is the need to balance local and global perspectives. Environmental issues often have both local and global dimensions, and

journalists must navigate the tension between covering immediate local concerns, such as pollution in a specific community, and broader global issues, such as climate change and deforestation. Environmental journalism must address both the localized impacts of environmental degradation and the larger, interconnected systems that contribute to these issues (Sardar, 2019). Journalists must also consider the long-term implications of environmental policies and practices, which may not always align with short-term political or economic interests.

Despite the many challenges faced by environmental journalists, there is growing recognition of the importance of their work. Environmental reporting is essential for informing the public about the consequences of environmental degradation, advocating for policy change, and promoting sustainable practices. As the world grapples with pressing environmental issues such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, the role of environmental journalists in shaping public discourse becomes increasingly important. Journalists who are able to overcome the challenges they face and report on environmental issues with integrity and expertise play a critical role in advancing environmental awareness and action.

The factors affecting environmental reporting from a journalist's perspective are complex and multifaceted, involving personal, ethical, organizational, and external elements. These factors influence the decisions journalists make about which environmental issues to cover, how to frame these issues, and the resources they have available to report on them. By understanding the challenges and constraints that environmental journalists face, we can better appreciate the importance of environmental reporting and the need for continued support for journalists working in this field. As environmental issues continue to gain prominence on the global stage, the role of environmental journalism in informing and engaging the public will be crucial for achieving sustainable solutions to the environmental challenges we face.

## **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

### **2.1.1 The Hierarchy of Influences Model**

On the current analysis the researcher implied the Hierarchy of Influences (HOI) model, which was introduced by Pamela Shoemaker and Stephen D. Reese (2011). The HOI model is an extension of the Gatekeeping Theory of media and communication. This model brings a description to the newsgathering, selection and production process by journalists in many ways.

The hierarchy of Influences (HOI) model adds details to the gatekeeping process through which a journalist filters message (news items). It was the Gatekeeping Theory that led to the formation of the HOI model. The HOI model suggests that different levels of influence shape news messages when information is sifted through, selected and produced as news (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996).

Shoemaker and Reese's HOI model identifies five key factors that influence media content: personal or individual influences, organizational influences within media outlets, newsroom practices, ideological influences, and external pressures from outside media organizations. Analyzing these influences is crucial to understanding how they affect the reporting of traumatic events such as conflict, violence, and extremism. This approach helps reveal the factors shaping journalists' coverage of sensitive and challenging topics.

The HOI model serves as a framework to understand the various levels of influence on media messages and how these factors shape the final news content. It identifies five hierarchical levels of influence, ranging from micro to macro. The first is the individual level, focusing on personal factors affecting journalists. The second is the routine level, involving standard practices and procedures in news production. The third is the organizational level, reflecting the policies and priorities of the news organization. The fourth is the extra-media (institutional) level, which includes external institutions and sources of influence. Finally, the fifth is the ideological (socio-cultural) level, encompassing broader societal norms and cultural values.

Relly and González de Bustamante (2014) utilized the HOI model as an analytical framework in qualitative studies examining the influences on Mexican journalists during violent events. Similarly, Relly and Zanger (2017) applied it to the context of internationally aided development in Afghanistan. The researcher considers the HOI model suitable for this study for several reasons. It provides a well-defined and extensively tested framework that explains the complexities of news production with precision. Its generic analytical tools make it adaptable to diverse cultural and professional contexts. Additionally, the model is sensitive to cultural and contextual nuances, ensuring a comprehensive approach to understanding media influences.

### **2.1.2 Individual-Level Factor(S)**

The first level of the HOI model focuses on individual-level factors that influence a journalist's professional behavior. These include demographic aspects such as socioeconomic status, education, training, and work experience, along with personal traits like family values,

gender, ethnicity, religious or personal beliefs, and political affiliation. These factors play a significant role in shaping a journalist's decisions and actions during the news production process, impacting the way stories are covered and presented.

Research indicates that economic pressures significantly impact journalists' work in the field. Studies by Hanitzsch et al. (2010) and Reese (2001) reveal that factors such as age, education, gender, and political and religious perspectives strongly influence how journalists report on conflict, violence, and extremism. Formal journalism education and specialized training play a crucial role in shaping journalists' approaches to reporting traumatic events. Their educational background enhances their critical thinking and decision-making skills, enabling them to handle sensitive and challenging reporting situations effectively.

### **2.1.3 Routine Level Factor(S)**

The second level of the HOI model focuses on routine-level factors, which include the rules, norms, procedures, and limits that influence a journalist's decisions during news production. Shoemaker and Reese (1996) describe these as "patterned, routinized, and repeated practices" that shape the decision-making process. These factors encompass unspoken rules, behavioral patterns, and ritualized practices that are often not explicitly defined within the media but significantly impact how journalists approach and produce news content.

Hanitzsch et al. (2010) found that organizational policies, newsroom traditions, and journalistic norms strongly influence journalism practices globally. However, in some contexts, unethical and immoral patterns can become ingrained in journalistic practices. For instance, in post-Saddam Hussein Iraq, many journalists reportedly had no ethical concerns about quoting sources for information, as observed by Relly et al. (2015).

### **2.1.4 Organizational Level Factor(S)**

The third level of the HOI model focuses on organizational-level factors, which include the influence of media editorial policies, journalistic goals, advertisements, financial interests, and power dynamics on journalists' decision-making. Editorial policies provide guidelines for various roles within the media organization, including managerial, editorial, reporting, and presenting tasks. Additionally, newsroom managers hold a crucial position, exerting both direct and indirect pressures on daily news production practices. They provide directions on which stories to cover or how to add information, guiding journalists in shaping the final content (Anderson, 2017).

Journalists often face a conflict between their internal, traditional journalistic professionalism and the external, managerial professionalism required by their organization during the news production process (Evetts, 2011). Aldridge and Evetts (2003) distinguish between occupational professionalism, which refers to the norms and values developed within the journalism profession itself, and organizational professionalism, which is influenced by the control exerted by top management in news organizations. Jungblut and Hoxha (2017) argue that media owners and editors are also impacted by economic and political factors. Furthermore, Milojević and Krstić (2018b) suggest that journalists often prioritize the interests of media owners over the needs and interests of the audience.

### **2.1.5 Extra-Media Level Factor(S)**

The fourth level of the HOI model is the Extra-media level, where journalists' decisions are influenced by external entities such as the government, public relations departments, interest groups, criminal or militant organizations, and both official and unofficial sources.

Shoemaker and Reese (2011) highlighted that the relationships between mass media and other institutions fall under this level, affecting the content of news. According to Reese and Shoemaker (2016), the extra-media level represents a "meso-level" environment, where economic, political, and cultural factors interact between the organization and society.

Research on journalism's independence from political and economic pressures has been extensive (Mabweazara, 2010; Milojević & Krstić, 2018a; Preston, 2008). Economic influences, such as media ownership, advertising, and profit expectations in Western media, have been discussed, while "media capture" explains how media can become controlled by the state, business, and political elites (Milojević & Krstić, 2018a).

### **2.1.6 Social System/Ideological Level Factor(S)**

The fifth and final level of the HOI model is social system/ideological influences, which focuses on how media content is shaped to support the power structure within the culture in which the journalist operates, particularly in conflict zones. It involves examining the assumptions about power and how it is distributed in society. While each of the previous levels influences media messages, Shoemaker and Reese (1996) argue that higher, more macro-level factors have a stronger impact on content than the lower, more micro-level influences. After outlining the five levels of influence in the HOI model, no literature speaks specifically, about journalists in Pakistan who report traumatic events.

### **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

Broadly research methods are divided into two categories, one is quantitative and other is qualitative method of research. The use of best and most relevant research methods depends on research goals, research subjects and largely depends on the nature of study you want to conduct. As the data for the present study was gathered qualitatively, therefore, qualitative method of research was applied in the current analysis Factors Affecting Environmental Reporting Journalist Perspective. Qualitative methods are used for non-numeric to conducted straightforward approach and technique that can be checked and tested to gather more reliable and accurate data.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

In the current analysis the researcher used the qualitative research design, specifically, thematic analysis to find out what Individual level factors affect journalists' decision when they report violent incidents for their media organizations. Qualitative research enables researchers to do in-depth and broader research and to have a deeper understanding of the issue under investigation (Creswell & Clark, 2007).

From the whole population 20 Pakistani environmental reporting journalists were selected as sample for in-depth interview. Furthermore, the selections of the journalists were based on purposive sampling technique.

#### **3.2 Data Source**

To understand their understanding of reporting environmental issues, the researcher used in-depth interviews with journalists in Islamabad. Islamabad is the federal capital of Pakistan and home to bureau offices and Head Offices of the national media organizations. Those journalists were selected for interview whose primary beat is Environmental Reporting along with other beats.

#### **3.3 Method**

This study used Thematic Analysis as a method to analyze the data, i.e., interviews with journalists. Braun, Clarke, and Terry (2014) define Thematic Analysis as a method for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterned meanings or themes in qualitative data. Thematic Analysis is deductive by nature, where the analysis is driven by the researcher's theoretical and analytic interests (Clarke, Braun, & Hayfield, 2015). The analysis is primarily

done at the semantic level. During the semantic approach, the identification of the themes is limited to the explicit meaning of the data. Braun and Clarke (2006) explain that the analytic process involves a progression from description to interpretation.

### **3.4 Study Sampling**

The researcher recruited 20 journalists working for media (print, broadcast and online) in Islamabad. Purposive and snowball sampling techniques, as developed by (Privitera, 2013), were used to recruit respondents. In the current analysis the following criteria were followed for the recruitment of Journalists

To include only those journalists who self-identify as climate journalists and who have covered and published on the issue in the past and to ensure that the journalists represent Pakistan's mainstream Urdu and English newspapers, television news channels, and online media.

The journalists who met the recruitment criteria were contacted by the researchers. The purpose of the study was explained to the shortlisted journalists, and their verbal consent was sought. A semi-structured interview protocol was used in interaction with the respondents. The interviews were conducted and recorded in-person in Urdu and then translated into English. The interviews were transcribed and then analyzed.

A total of 20 journalists were interviewed during the summer (June –July 2023. Most of them worked for multiple organizations and in different roles although they regularly worked with only one organization. The names of all participants were withheld, and identification codes were given, like Participant 1, Participant 2 and so on.

## 4.0 DATA ANALYSIS

The current chapter analyzed about the Factors Affecting Environmental Reporting Journalist Perspective. There are following eight tables that cover the main three research questions, which elaborated furthermore questions. Each table has particular themes, finding and example quotes regarding the interviewers. The researcher deployed interview form the selected participants. So, the current analysis explores factors affecting environmental reporting from the perspective of journalists in Pakistan. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis, focusing on responses from 20 environmental journalists in Islamabad.

### Tables 4.1 - 4.9

#### A. General Perception of Environmental Reporting

##### Table No. 4.1

##### Question 1: How do you define environmental journalism in your own words?

Theme	Findings	Example Quotes
Bridging Science and Society	Environmental journalism is seen as a way to connect scientific issues with the general public.	“Environmental journalism is about bridging the gap between science and society.”
Raising Awareness	Emphasis on making people aware of critical environmental challenges.	“It’s a tool to inform people about the pressing issues affecting our planet.”

##### Interpretation:

In the above table the Journalists understanding environmental journalism as together an educational and encouragement instrument, aiming to translate multifaceted environmental problems into handy narratives. Their attention is on connecting understanding gaps and rising public consciousness around environmental alarms.

##### Table No. 4.2

##### Question 2: What motivated you to pursue environmental reporting as part of your career?

Theme	Findings	Example Quotes
Passion for Nature	Personal interest in environmental issues often inspires career choices.	“My love for nature motivated me to focus on environmental journalism.”

Observing Local Impact	Witnessing environmental degradation firsthand drives journalists to act.	“The water shortages in my hometown opened my eyes to the importance of environmental reporting.”
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**Interpretation:**

In the present table the researcher explores about the Personal practices and a passion for the environment are the major instigators for journalists. These elements shape their assurance to reporting on environmental problems, frequently as a feedback to viewing local natural tasks.

**Table No. 4.3**

**Question 3: In your experience, how is environmental journalism perceived in the broader field of journalism in Pakistan?**

Theme	Findings	Example Quotes
Undervalued Field	Environmental journalism is not prioritized compared to other beats.	“It’s often seen as a niche topic, not a mainstream concern.”
Growing Recognition	Some believe its importance is increasing due to climate change.	“The recent floods have shown how critical environmental stories are.”

**Interpretation:**

The above table interprets that the environmental journalism remains below respected associated to mainstream beats such as legislation or finances, its significance is gradually rising due to the growing regularity and sternness of climate-related happenings.

## **B. Ethical Considerations and Challenges**

**Table No. 4.4**

**Question 4: What ethical challenges do you face when reporting on environmental issues?**

Theme	Findings	Example Quotes
Balancing Objectivity	Struggling to stay neutral while advocating for urgent issues.	“Sometimes, reporting the truth feels like activism.”
External Pressures	Corporations and government entities attempt to influence reporting.	“I’ve faced direct pressure to avoid criticizing major industrial projects.”

**Interpretation:**

The data in the current table evolves the ethical challenges in environmental journalism often turn around upholding independence while speak to imperative and complex problems. Medias also face outside burdens that may cooperation the honesty of their effort.

**Table No. 4.5****Question 5: How do you ensure accuracy and objectivity while reporting on controversial environmental topics?**

Theme	Findings	Example Quotes
Fact-Checking	Emphasis on verifying data through multiple sources.	“I cross-check facts with scientists and credible studies.”
Avoiding Bias	Efforts to present balanced perspectives despite personal beliefs.	“I try to show both sides of the story, even when I have a clear stance.”

**Interpretation:**

In the interpretation about the accuracy and objectivity the table shows that the Journalists trust deeply on careful fact-checking and struggle to deliver well-adjusted viewing platform to continue trustworthiness, particularly when cover argumentative environmental problems.

**Table No. 4.6****Question 6: Have you ever faced pressure from external entities (e.g., government, corporations) regarding environmental reporting?**

Theme	Findings	Example Quotes
Corporate Influence	Corporations exert pressure to downplay negative impacts.	“I was asked to omit findings on pollution caused by a major factory.”
Government Censorship	Government entities discourage reporting on politically sensitive topics.	“Certain topics, like deforestation linked to large projects, are often flagged as sensitive.”

**Interpretation:**

The above table replicates that the external forces from establishments and administration entities stance important challenges, often delaying the self-determination of journalists to cover obviously on environmental problems. These feedbacks were come when the researcher asked from the participant as mentioned in the column of example quotes.

### C. Organizational and Resource Factors

**Table No. 4.7**

#### Question 7: What resources does your organization provide to support environmental journalism?

Theme	Findings	Example Quotes
Limited Resources	Organizations often allocate minimal resources for environmental reporting.	“We don’t get budgets for investigative environmental stories.”
Inconsistent Training	Training opportunities are rare and not standardized.	“Only a few journalists get the chance to attend workshops.”

**Interpretation:**

The current table also shows about the availability of the re-sources from the organizational side, for the support of environments journalism, the table stated that the organizations often absence satisfactory resources and exercise to sustenance environmental journalism successfully, which bounds the opportunity and quality of journalism.

**Table No. 4.8**

#### Question 8: Do you feel that your organization prioritizes environmental issues? Why or why not?

Theme	Findings	Example Quotes
Low Priority	Environmental issues are considered less important compared to political and sensational news.	“It’s seen as a low-priority beat unless there’s a disaster.”
Market-Driven Decisions	Prioritization depends on audience interest and profitability.	“Our stories depend on what will get clicks and views.”

### **Interpretation:**

In the present table the data reflect the Market driven decisions and Low priority regarding environmental problems. The ranking of environmental matters within societies is often determined by market powers and people attentiveness rather than the fundamental significance of environmental reporting.

### **Table No. 4.9**

**Question 9: Are there any constraints within your organization that affect your ability to cover environmental stories effectively? If yes, please elaborate.**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Example Quotes</b>
Time Constraints	Journalists often lack time to conduct in-depth environmental investigations.	“We’re usually focused on breaking news, so environmental stories take a backseat.”
Financial Limitations	Limited budgets restrict the scope of environmental reporting.	“We can’t afford to travel to remote areas for detailed coverage.”

### **Interpretation:**

The last table digs out between the constraint and ability of covering the environmental happening effectively. The outlet of the data demonstrates that the time and economic limitations are important obstructions that delay wide-ranging reportage of environmental stories, disturbing the depth and scope of journalism.

## **4.10 Implementation of the Study**

This study has two implementations: one is theoretical implementation of, and the other is practical implementation. Theoretical implementation is that I tested the hierarchy model implementation in environmental issues with Pakistani perspectives. The practical implementation is with the help of this study finding I dig out the factor that affects the journalist while reporting environmental issues. Along with this I also addressed the journalist's community and organization, policy makers and government organization as well.

## **5.0 DISCUSSION CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

### **5.1 Discussion**

Environmental reporting in Pakistan, from the perspective of journalists, is influenced by various factors that shape how environmental issues are covered in the media. Journalists define environmental journalism as a bridge between science and society, aiming to make complex environmental topics understandable to the public while raising awareness of pressing issues. Personal motivation, such as a deep passion for nature or witnessing local environmental degradation, often drives journalists to focus on this beat. However, environmental journalism is still considered a niche field within the broader media landscape, often overshadowed by politics, economics, and other mainstream topics. Despite its undervaluation, there is growing recognition of its importance, especially with the increasing frequency of climate-related events like floods and droughts.

Ethical challenges also perform an important character in environmental journalism. Journalists often fight to equilibrium objectivity despite the fact covering crucial environmental matters, predominantly when the journalism might support for particular environmental movements. External forces from establishments and administration entities to escape condemning definite industries or schemes complicate their capability to report spontaneously. However, journalists highlight difficult fact-checking and attempt to escape bias by bestowing multiple viewpoints, even when they have personal views on the problems. These burdens can make it problematic for reporters to maintain the honesty of their journalism, particularly when covering administratively penetrating environmental matters.

Within news organizations, journalists face several constraints that hinder effective environmental reporting. Time and financial limitations are two key challenges that restrict the ability of journalists to conduct in-depth environmental investigations. With tight deadlines focused on breaking news, environmental stories often take a backseat. Additionally, limited budgets prevent journalists from traveling to remote areas to gather firsthand information, further reducing the scope of environmental reporting. Training opportunities for journalists to enhance their skills in environmental reporting are also rare and inconsistent. As a result, the resources and organizational support for environmental journalism are minimal, making it harder for journalists to cover environmental stories comprehensively. Market-driven decisions, where

audience interest and profitability determine the focus of reporting, also contribute to the marginalization of environmental issues in media outlets.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

In conclusion, environmental reporting in Pakistan faces a range of challenges and constraints that hinder its effectiveness and prioritization in the media. Journalists view their role as bridging the gap between scientific knowledge and the general public, raising awareness about critical environmental issues. However, environmental journalism is still undervalued within the broader journalistic landscape, often overshadowed by more mainstream topics like politics and economics. Despite this, the increasing frequency of climate-related events has led to a growing recognition of its importance.

The ethical tasks such as harmonizing objectivity while encouraging for imperative environmental movements, as well as outside pressures from conglomerates and government bodies, make difficulties the task of environmental reporters. To uphold reliability, journalists trust on detailed fact-checking and struggle to present stable viewpoints, but these energies are frequently destabilized by outside encouragements. Moreover, reporters face important organizational restrictions, containing restricted resources, time, and economic backing, which distress the gravity and excellence of environmental journalism. The absence of exercise chances further impairs these tasks, and the market-driven test of the media often indications to a lower importance being located on environmental stories except they are connected to extraordinary happenings or misadventures.

Ultimately, the findings highlight that while environmental journalism is crucial for raising awareness and fostering a public understanding of environmental issues, its potential is constrained by a combination of ethical dilemmas, external pressures, and organizational limitations. To improve the scope and quality of environmental reporting, greater investment in resources, training, and organizational support is necessary, along with a shift toward recognizing the intrinsic value of environmental issues in media coverage.

## **5.3 Suggestions**

The current analysis based on the analysis of factors affecting environmental reporting in Pakistan, several suggestions can help improve the scope, quality, and impact of environmental journalism:

**Increase Organizational Support for Environmental Reporting:** News organizations should assign more incomes to environmental reporting, containing dedicated resources for exploratory journalism and travel expenditures for reporters to cover distant or underreported environmental problems. Investing in preparation platforms for reporters will help prepare them with the essential talents and information to cover multifaceted environmental matters successfully.

**Promote Awareness and Recognition of Environmental Journalism:** As environmental journalism is still often seen as a niche or secondary beat, efforts should be made to highlight its importance in educating the public and advocating for change. Media outlets and professional journalism associations can organize events, conferences, and workshops that emphasize the role of environmental journalists in addressing climate change, biodiversity loss, and other pressing environmental challenges.

**Address Ethical Pressures and Ensure Independence:** Media outlets should inaugurate strong ethical strategies to back reporters in upholding neutrality while encouraging for urgent environmental problems. It is necessary to defend journalists from outdoor stresses from corporations or government bodies, letting them to report spontaneously without distress of censorship or revenge. Free editorial procedures and defenses for reporters facing compression should be carried out.

**Foster Collaboration with Environmental Experts and NGOs:** Journalists can collaborate with environmental scientists, activists, and NGOs to gain access to accurate data, conduct thorough investigations, and report on lesser-known environmental issues. Establishing partnerships with these organizations can help overcome the resource constraints that many journalists face and improve the accuracy and depth of reporting.

**Shift the Focus Towards Long-Term Environmental Issues:** While breaking news and sensational stories often dominate media coverage, environmental issues require sustained attention. News organizations should recognize the long-term importance of environmental reporting, even when there is no immediate crisis. Journalists should be encouraged to work on in-depth investigative pieces that explore ongoing environmental challenges and solutions over time.

**Strengthen Public Engagement and Advocacy:** Journalists should continue to use their platform to engage the public in conversations about environmental sustainability, conservation,

and policy change. Encouraging readers and viewers to take action, whether through individual lifestyle changes or advocating for stronger environmental policies, can amplify the impact of environmental reporting.

**Government and Corporate Accountability:** There is a need for stronger accountability mechanisms to ensure that environmental issues, particularly those involving corporations and government projects, are covered transparently. Environmental journalists should be supported in their efforts to investigate and report on corruption, violations of environmental laws, and unsustainable practices, regardless of the influence of powerful stakeholders.

By following up these above suggestions, Pakistan's environmental reporting zone can evolve to convert a more commanding force for alteration, providing the people with the information required to make knowledgeable judgments and take action on dangerous environmental problems.

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