

## Professionalism, Safety Measures, and threats: An Exploratory Approach

Syed Muhammad Bilal Shah<sup>1</sup>, Farish Ullah Khan Yousafzai<sup>2</sup>  
University of Gujrat, Gujrat-Pakistan<sup>12</sup>

Corresponding author Email: [syedbilal@iiu.edu.pk](mailto:syedbilal@iiu.edu.pk)

**Cite this paper:** Shah, S. M. B. & Yousafzai, F. U. K. (2020). Professionalism, safety measures, and threats: An exploratory approach. *Paradigms*, 14(1), 117-124.

All citizens have equal rights to lead their life in any country in the world. The primary responsibility of the government is to protect the rights of all human beings on equal basis residing in a country. This study is an endeavor to highlight the intensity and reasons behind the threats received by working journalists and media professionals performing their duties in Pakistan. Furthermore, it has been generally observed that not all media professionals are posed equally to threats. Therefore, this study examined only those working journalists and media professionals who are facing different types of threats by state and non-state actors. Out of these media professionals such as working journalists, reporters, correspondents, anchor persons, columnists and cameramen are performing more risky jobs. These threats not only include kidnapping, harassment, injuries but also results in the deaths of working journalists and media professionals. It has also been observed that in some cases, the families and friends of the journalists are being killed without any reason. The study includes all kinds of media i.e. electronic, printing, and social media in Pakistan. The journalists are sometimes victimized by both - state and non-state actors while practicing freedom of expression. The research is descriptive in nature based on secondary data published by renowned national and international organizations. The study finds that none of the provinces is safe for working journalists and media professionals in Pakistan. These persons are penalized for bringing the reality out among the general public. The study implies that government and media owners must ensure the safety of journalists in Pakistan. This research also provides the safety measures in contextual factors for the working journalists and media professionals of Pakistan.

**Keywords:** Threats, Media, Working journalists, Media Professionals, Safety Measures

### INTRODUCTION

Social, political, and economic development are the means to the progress of human strength as they enable them to achieve their national goals. The media is known as the fourth pillar of a state. Communication specialists, mainly media professionals, are worried about to face the menace of terrorism while performing their professional duties in conflicting areas. For the well-being of society, media professionals must follow the code of ethics in order to carry out their responsibilities. The countries whose media is free and strong and democratic can achieve these objectives Jamil(2018) argues that Pakistan remained non-democratic in most of its regimes. Mostly working journalists and media professionals stay busy all the time in search of news items. In order to get something worthy they invest their efforts to collect and get it published. Sometimes for getting information they face different kinds of threats even loss of their lives. In addition, it has been keenly observed that all media professionals are not working on the dangerous frontline to face threats equally. Therefore, this said research study examined only those working journalists and media professionals who are more vulnerable to different kinds of threats by state and non-state actors. So that the media professionals such as working journalists, reporters, correspondents, anchor persons, columnists and cameramen are performing more dangerous jobs. They face enormous pressures from state and non-state actors during this process. For the reason, they always remain ready to face all sorts of threat to provide factual news to the audience.

The world is losing several loses several journalists annually, and Pakistan is no exception to it because of law and order situation. International Federation of Journalists declared

Pakistan as one of the most dangerous countries for Journalists(Khan, 2016). However, the situation of Pakistan is intricate regarding the safety threats to journalists (Jamil, 2017). She further added that even though Pakistan is much better off than Libya, Iraq, Somalia, and Syria that have torn apart by civil war and internal conflict. (Ponkey, 2013) argues that because of the threatening situation existing in Pakistan, the journalists cannot serve the community with a free and objective approach. Heinze & Freedman (2010) argued that media in democratic societies should enjoy more freedom and easy access to the information. it is a common practice that a number of journalists are being harassed, injured, humiliated, and murdered on account of practicing freedom of expression (Khan, 2016).

History of Pakistan tells us that all tactics of harassment were used against journalists in the era of Ayub Khan. A journalist was covering the rally of the students when unknown people tried to shoot him on 8<sup>th</sup> December 1986. Nadeem Shahid, who was working with daily Tameer, Rawalpindi, was lucky to survive after getting several fatal injuries. In January 1965, a journalist Zameer Qureshi was killed(Khan, 2016). She further claimed that the ranking of Pakistan has improved in the Global Impunity Index in conviction in the cases of two murdered reporters, but still much is needed to be done to improve the prevailing situation.

According to Jamil(2018), several international organizations have declared the Pakistani environment as unsafe for journalists because of different reasons such as direct physical and psychological tortures that may affect the accuracy, truthfulness, and impartiality of the profession.

The focus of the current study is to discuss challenges the media professionals are facing in Pakistan. According to International News Safety Institute (2019), "A reporter is a type of journalist who researches, processes, writes and reports information to present via media outlets. He or she conducts interviews, engages in research, and files reports. Pye (1963) observes the role of Pakistani media as a "transitional communications process."

### Research Gap

Ali and Shafiq (2019) analyzed the effect of work environment on professional integrity by using qualitative method in 2019 but their study was restricted to Islamabad only. Ahmed (2019) believes that "Journalism in Pakistan: A Risky Profession." He based his work on collected from 150 members but the respondents were consisted of registered members of press clubs only and the census approach was ignored which seems illogical. Siraj (2009) critically analyzed the freedom of Press in Pakistan, but the focus of this research was restricted to military regime only. Likewise, Khan (2016) declared the profession of reporting as one of the life threatening professions in Pakistan but the focus of the study was relied on the data from IFJ and CPJ only. In addition, Riaz (2015) explored the challenges faced by rural journalists in Pakistan. This research work was inclined towards the rural journalists only and the rest of journalists ignored. Hanan et al., (2016) depicted the media role as strength towards democracy in Pakistan But their study failed to capture the main threats faced by journalists in Pakistan. Jamil (2018) applied mix method approach and investigated contextual factors along with safety threats in Pakistan but ignored the remedies to be proposed to journalists.

This research paper is an attempt to explore the primary reasons of fatal safety issues faced by journalists in Pakistan as a concept. Media professionals, especially journalists, usually work seven days a week to keep the public informed about activities happening in the society. But due several reasons particularly law and order situation prevailing in Pakistan, they are highly exposed to target killings, suicide bombings, and physical and mental torture. They have been facing a lot of problems, hurdles, and even sacrificing their lives since 1947. This study is an attempt to explore reasons behind this situation and answer the following research questions.

Have media organizations set any criteria for the appointment of journalists?

1. Do journalists have a professional degree? Whether or not they investigated and provide unbiased interpretations for the public Pakistani media organizations fulfilling their primary interest. Hence, this theory urges journalists to strengthen responsibilities?
2. Does the state take notice of the threats faced by media democracy and development. Many countries have devised a code of ethics based on the social responsibility theory (Baran & Davis, 2015).
3. Which one is responsible to provide safety measures protection to the journalists—media organization and or the state---

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The handmade press was introduced in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, and the first book was printed in the 15<sup>th</sup> century in Europe (Stewart, 2013). During imperialism, the mass media remained under control because the rulers were using the church in Europe as an authority to convey the messages to the public. The rulers were

utilizing this medium, but doubt existed in their minds that print media can create problems against their rule. Print media was creating awareness among the people about their rights, so the rulers in Europe announced capital punishment against media professional found guilty as per law of the time. In 1663, a publisher faced capital punishment for printing a book without mentioning the name of the writer. The rights of the masses introduced in this book that all rulers are accountable for their deeds and decisions ;if anyone does not feel responsible, then masses have the right to disobey the ruler (Roensch & Georgia, 2009).

The government was not showing interest in education. That is why the literacy rate was too low, just elites had a privilege to arrange private tutors. They also mentioned that due to the illiteracy problem, the growth of print media remained low till 18<sup>th</sup> century. East India Company started some English language newspapers in the sub-continent, which were read by their employees only. In 1822, Jam-e-Jahanuma, an Urdu language newspaper emerged, this newspaper was treated as a threat against the interests of the company (Shahzad, 2019). According to him, the Press Act introduced in 1823, named as Press & Publication Ordinance (PPO) for Urdu newspapers so mentioning the names of the owner, editor, and publisher were made obligatory. The era above proved tough for mass communication and under this ordinance, several owners and editors awarded punishments several times.

The media chiefly performs three leading roles of scorekeeper, gatekeeper, and watchdog. Entertainment, cultural transmission, correlation, and surveillance are the main functions of mass media. The media works as the backbone of any democracy. To highlight or inform facts and figure criticize and stimulate debate is the core responsibility of the media. Media is significant for a society to get collect and provided information on different subjects and keeps the audience.

### Social Responsibility Theory

Social responsibility theory supports and advocates the right of freedom of the press but also requires the journalists to perform their professional duties with responsibility. The theory provides a whole set up to journalists about how to work. It emphasizes that a journalist should keep in mind faithfulness to professional standards and guarantee accuracy, and objectivity. The notion of this theory is freedom with responsibility, which requires a journalist to report news story with facts duly

investigated and provide unbiased interpretations for the public editorial roles and standards to achieve broader goals for a code of ethics based on the social responsibility theory (Baran & Davis, 2015).

Pakistan was also called the most dangerous country in Asia as 14 journalists lost their lives in the line of duty in 2012 (HRCP, 2013). There are four administrative unites / provinces and two autonomous territories and one federal territory in Pakistan. The provinces are named as, Baluchistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, and Sindh while Autonomous, Semi-Autonomous Territories include Azad Jammu and Kashmir now has been

merged in KPK and Gilgit Baltistan and Islamabad is one federal territory of Pakistan. Following section dictates the information regarding provinces of Pakistan.

Amnesty International is a non-profit and noble prize-winning organization funded in 1961. London pointed out the Khuzdar a district of Baluchistan as a 'graveyard for journalists' (Amnesty International, 2014). From 1994-2015, media organizations of Baluchistan have been attacked 13 times, and 12 journalists lost their lives while 13 injured (SATP, 2015). According to PIPS (2014) report 17 on-duty journalists killed in this province from 2000 to 2013, Panjgur, Khuzdar, Gawadar, Kech, Kohlu, Kalat and Dera Bugti districts become unsafe for the journalists. During this period 13 journalists murdered out of 17 in the district of Khuzdar. So due to these reasons, the journalists prefer to leave these areas to protect themselves and their families. Reporting in conflicting regions is not an easy and welcoming task for the reporters, because nobody can afford to offend tribal systems, insurgents, and Sardars, including government (Amnesty International, 2014). Nevertheless they are working there in the hope for the best regarding their security (Khan, 2010). The working environment for journalists is getting very stressful and harmful since 2008.

Up to 2013, thirty-two (32) journalists had been killed in Baluchistan; unfortunately, out of them, only three cases registered. One of the reasons behind this seemingly is that who try to report attacks from extremists' groups or different tribes receives threats and harassed. Warnings do not end here, but they also face other consequences when reports include sensitive information about separatist groups, arm forces, militants, or government. Journalists face pressures from militant groups and even state agencies to change the information in their favor. In general, it has been observed that the journalists and sub-editors face the consequences, and they have to pay a heavy price for their work if they follow their instructions or not (International Federation of Journalists, 2013). It seems that due to increasing intensity of uprisings, the Baluchistan become a no-go area for the journalists.

The situation in Baluchistan is getting worse day by day since 2008. Reporting about the violation of human rights also creates troubles for them. Baluchistan is also a dangerous place in Pakistan for journalists (International Federation of Journalists, 2015). Punjab is the biggest province of Pakistan, which is the most crowded place, there are 36 districts. From the perspective of journalism, the situation of Punjab is still worse but slightly better than the rest of the other provinces of Pakistan. During 1994-2015, at least six times attacked noted in which 4 journalists were killed and 9 injured (SATP, 2015). Islamabad is the capital of Pakistan, and the working environment for the journalists is also slightly better. In Punjab province and the capital territory of Pakistan, the extremist groups, militants, politicians, feudal lords, and the government of Punjab become the source of troubles for the journalists. History is the witness that intelligence agencies also interfered in the duties of journalists in the past (Pak Institute for Peace Studies, 2014). Three journalists were murdered in Punjab and Islamabad in 2011. Furthermore, in 1997, 1998, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009,

2010, one journalist was killed in every year. It is pertinent to note that from all categories of media professionals, only journalists were killed in both regions during this period (Committee to Protect Journalists, 2015). The matter of journalists is not settled here yet.

FATA was a semiautonomous tribal area located in northwestern region Pakistan. It was merged in its neighboring province in KPK in 2018. It is located in the northwestern region adjacent to the border of Afghanistan. Almost 28 times attacked noted on the media professionals in KPK. In these attacks, 25 journalists were killed and 20 injured from 1994 to 2015 (SATP, 2015). Almost 28 journalists were killed from 1922 to 2014 in both regions. CPJ claimed that 1998 is witnessed for the killing of Journalists, in 2003-2004 journalists killed, one journalist killed in the year of 2006, two in 2007 and three were in 2008. Five journalists, including a media worker, put to death in 2009, four journalists were killed in 2010. Two journalists lost their lives in 2011, a media worker in 2012, as well as three journalists, shot dead in 2013 (Committee to Protect Journalists, 2015).

Wana is one of the largest towns of the South Waziristan Agency of Pakistan. Two journalists were killed in 2005 (Pak Institute for Peace Studies, 2014). Since the event of 9/11, the security condition becomes worse for the journalists working in KPK and FATA. They have been facing different kinds of threats on daily basis (International Federation of Journalists, 2015). Tribal groups, extremist militants and intelligence agencies have made these areas more complicated or no-go for the journalists. There are several regions of South and North Waziristan where the media has no right to enter. Local journalists of KPK and FATA paid substantial prices in the form of intimidation, kidnappings, injuries, detention, domestic sacrifices, and murders for their professional work (Pak Institute for Peace Studies, 2014). It has been mentioned in the annual report of IFJ2019 that Pakistan is a place where the journalists are murdered through target killings. According to (International Federation of Journalists, 2019) report five journalists including two staff members killed in 2018.

The increasing number of journalists who lost their lives in the line of duty portrays Pakistan as a country where the constitution grants its citizens the right to free speech, but they are still struggling for this right. Now, look at the situation of journalists in Sindh. According to report (International Federation of Journalists, 2016) Journalists, writers are persecuted and victimized through regulatory, legislative restrictions. They are also targeted by political extremists and religious groups even on-line bloggers are not safe. For journalists, the Pakistan has become most dangerous place in the world. On 25<sup>th</sup> April 2015 the outspoken human rights activist namely Sabeen Mahmud was murdered for hosting a program on 'disappeared people' in Baluchistan. Zeenat Shahzadi, a freelance Journalist was kidnapped in Lahore because she wrote and distributed a lot of material over missing of an Indian citizen via Twitter and Facebook.

The journalism community of Sindh also suffered a loss of 12 journalist's lives, and 9 journalists got injured in fifteen attacks

during the period of 1994-2015(SATP, 2015). It is noteworthy to note that the journalists of Sindh work in a critical situation. Journalists feel pressure, threaten, and even get into trouble while doing their duties. Journalists also shared that sometimes they change the date of their news reports and face safety problems as well. During clash among different tribes in the districts of Sindh such as Larkana, Kashmir, Jacobabad and Shikarpur journalists face security issues. They are likely to be ready for intimidation or aggression. In the capital of Sindh, Taliban militants, security forces, political parties, criminal gangs, and sectarian groups become the sources of trouble for them(Pak Institute for Peace Studies, 2014).

IFJ international organization for journalists has mentioned in its report that law enforcement agencies, terrorists feudal lords, tribal systems are causes behind the assassination, assaults, and threats to the journalists of Sindh(International Federation of Journalists, 2013). The data of different organizations show the same arguments that political parties, sectarian groups, terrorists, and other dominant persons used their powers to become the sources of oppression for the journalists as well. Eighteen (18) journalists and three (3) media workers put to death in Karachi and Sindh. In the years of 2000, 2001 and 2006 a journalist lost his life per year. Almost 2 journalists were killed in 1994, 2002, 2007, 2010, and 2011. Moreover, at least 3 journalists, including media workers murdered in 2014(Committee to Protect Journalists, 2015).

Pakistani reporter, namely Aziz Memon, murdered in Mehrabpur, after receiving series of threats according to a news report, (CPJ, 2020) published on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2020, Washington D.C. He was working for Sindhi TV as well as in the newspaper of Daily Kawish. "The tragic murder of Aziz Memon deserves swift justice, which is something Pakistani authorities have repeatedly failed to deliver for journalists," Steven Butler, program coordinator of Asia, said. "Given the victim's previous allegations of threats from local officials, it is essential that the investigation be free from political meddling." Memon released a video months earlier, currently circulating on Twitter in which he addressed that the officials of the opposition Pakistan People Party and police threatened him over his coverage about individuals were paid for attending "train march." Memon also highlighted PPP is dominant party of Sindh and Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Chairman PPP stopped on train stations to give speeches.

A statement issued by Chair, PPP in which he had condemned the murder and called for an impartial investigation. SSP Mohammad Farooq told CPJ they were interrogating his murder and admitted that a year ago; Memon complained about police threats but did not report about any threat during the last 6 months. Several protests conducted by the journalists against police officials in Singh reported in December by CPJ. In 2019, according to the global impunity index, Pakistan stood on 8<sup>th</sup> position by highlighting the figure of 16 unsolved murders of journalists in the last decade. CPJ announced, according to their detailed record, Pakistan provided justice in only three cases of killings out of 34 journalists who were murdered during their work since 1992 (Committee to Protect Journalists, 2015).

In the line of duty, murders of Pakistani journalists are increasing day by day. It is getting worse because the constitution of this country grants the right to speech without any fear, but in reality, journalists have not got their rights, and they are still struggling for that (Pak Institute for Peace Studies, 2014).

From 2008 to 2014, at least 34 journalists lost their lives while carrying out their duties in FATA. In 2005, a van carrying 11 journalists was targeted, leaving 2 journalists dead in Wana, South Waziristan. The year 2006 is claimed to be the year full of brutalities against media practitioners as the number of journalists killed is 3, and the figure of those assaulted and tormented rose up to 206. Hayatullah Khan was also abducted and then murdered in 2006 in North Waziristan. The year 2008 took the life of Dr. Noor Hakeem from Bajaur. Another journalist named Muhammad Ibrahim Jan in Bajaur Agency lost his life in 2009. Abdul Muhammad and Pervez Khan Muhammad from Mohmand Agency, as well as Nasarullah Khan Afridi from Khyber Agency, were among journalists murdered in 2010. North Waziristan's Shafi Ullah was killed in June 2011. Mohmand Agency's Mukaram Khan Atif was assassinated in January 2012. In February 2013, Malik Mumtaz of North Waziristan lost his life in the line of duty. Among the journalists killed, only one case of a murdered journalist received the treatment it deserved(Khan, 2014).

Reporters must pay substantial prices for reporting on violation of human rights by various sources and reporting on the prevailing political situation. The presence of the Taliban, as well as intelligence agencies, possesses danger to Journalists in both the regions. It has also been observed that employers or the organizations journalists work for have failed to provide any security or related training to journalists (International Federation of Journalists, 2013). According to(UNESCO, 2019), 100 journalists are killed each year in the world. In the wake of these statistics, it is safe to claim that more than 1000 journalists have been killed in twelve years (from 2007-2019) out of them 93% were local journalists.

### **Legal Framework and Freedom of Expression**

Article 17 of the Pakistani Constitution, 1973 provides right to every citizen of the state for establishing press organizations provided that such organizations should not work against the interests of Pakistan and its Public.

Article 19 of PC guarantees Freedom of Expression of every citizen, but this right can be exercised under some restrictions mentioned in other parts of the constitution.

Article 19A has described that everyone can get information regarding Public matters, keeping in view the necessary legal requirements, in this regard(Alam, 2015).

- Pakistan Penal Code, 1860 (PPC)
- Telegraph Act, 1885 (TA)
- Press and Publications Ordinance, 1963 (PPO)
- Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation Act, 1973 (PBCA)
- Press and Publications Ordinance, 1988 (PPO)
- Contempt of Court Ordinance, 2002 (CCO)
- Defamation Ordinance, 2002 (DO)

- Freedom of Information Ordinance, 2002 (FIO)
- Press Council of Pakistan Ordinance, 2002 (PCPO)
- Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority Ordinance, 2002 (PEMRAO)
- Press, Newspaper, News Agencies and Books Registration Ordinance, 2002 (PNNABRO)
- Intellectual Property Organization of Pakistan Act, 2012 (IPOPA)
- Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act, 2016 (PECA)
- Right to Access to Information Act, 2017 (RAIA).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study includes and analyses descriptive summary of threats and attacks on journalists and the data provided by 13 well-known national and international organizations—eight are Pakistani and five are international organizations. International organizations include International Federation of Journalists, Reporters Sans Frontiers, – Committee to Protect Journalists, UNESCO, Freedom House. Pakistani organizations include – Pakistan Press Foundation, – Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, – Civic Action Resources, – Freedom Network, – Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists, – All Pakistan Newspaper Society, – Pakistan Broadcasters Association, and – Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors.

Out of five selected international organizations, the data and website of one organization i.e. – Civic Action Resources is missing. On the other hand, only 4 out of 8 chosen Pakistani organizations are maintaining their websites out of these 4 one organization does not publish any data. Hence, three organizations' data is included in the sample.

## Analyses and Discussions

International Federation of Journalists, an international organization working for the safety of journalists produced a list of most dangerous countries in the world for journalists. It is pertinent to note that Pakistan was included in the said list (International Federation of Journalists, 2015) showing the awful situation for journalists in the country.

It is also known as Reporters without Borders. It is a multinational organization involved in different operations. This organization intends to publish a press freedom index annually (see Table 1). In 2002, the organization provided the data of 139 countries of the world, Pakistan ranked at 119<sup>th</sup> position out of 139 countries. Despite of improvement in freedom index, Pakistan occupied the worst situation in the graph. It is evident because instead of having different rules and regulation and advocacies of the journalists globally, Pakistan secured 142<sup>nd</sup> position out of 180 countries even inclined toward negative in 2019 in press freedom index (see Table 2).

**Table 1: Annual Worldwide Press Freedom Index**

Years	Pakistan Ranking	Out of Worldwide countries	Years	Pakistan Ranking	Out of Worldwide countries
2002	119	139	2011	151	179
2003	129	166	2012	159	180
2004	150	167	2013	159	179
2005	150	167	2014	158	180
2006	157	168	2015	159	180
2007	152	169	2016	147	180
2008	152	173	2017	139	180
2009	159	175	2018	139	180
2010	151	178			

Source: <https://rsf.org/en/ranking/> from 2002-2018

**Table 2: Information provided by Reporter without Borders – 2017-2019**

Years	out of 180 countries Pakistan's Position	World Press Freedom Index Score	Difference in index as compared to previous years	Difference in position as compared to previous years
2017	139	43.55	-	-
2018	139	43.55	-	-
2019	142	45.83	2.28	-3

Source: <https://rsf.org/en/ranking/2017-2019>

In addition, Reporters without Borders declared that 69 journalists have been killed in Pakistan during 2002-2015 (Khan, 2016).

The focus of this research remained to depict the hardships of Pakistani journalists, so according to a report published by (CPJ, 2020) 1366 journalists have been killed worldwide, including 61 journalists in Pakistan on account of working on dangerous assignments during 1992-2020. Motive confirmed and year wise details in Table 3. It is interesting to note that more channels were launched in Pakistan during General Pervaiz Musharraf regime of in 2002. Before 2002, only 4 journalists were killed in 10 years. After the broadcasting of private media channels, number of killings of journalists increased.

**Table 3: Yearly Killings of Pakistani Journalists**

Year	Journalists killed	Year	Journalists killed
1992	0	2007	5
1993	0	2008	5
1994	2	2009	4
1995	0	2010	8
1996	0	2011	7
1997	1	2012	7
1998	0	2013	5
1999	0	2014	3
2000	1	2015	1
2001	0	2016	2
2002	2	2017	1
2003	1	2018	1
2004	1	2019	0
2005	2	Up to February, 2020	0
2006	2	<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>

Source: <https://cpj.org/reports/2019/10/getting-away-with-murder-killed-justice.php>

Committee to Protect Journalists (2020), also produced country wise data on October 30, 2019, regarding impunity index., we will also take a look at the impunity rate of unresolved cases of Pakistani journalists who have been killed, but their culprits have not yet been identified from 2008-2019 (See Table 4). It is clear from the Table 4 that 214 cases of the martyred journalists remained unsolved because the killers were not captured or if captures, in case, not convicted.

**Table 4: Unsolved Murders of Pakistani Journalists**

200	200	201	201	201	201	201	201	201	201	201	201
8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
8	10	12	14	19	23	22	22	21	21	26	16

Source: [https://cpj.org/data/reports.php?status=Imprisoned&cc\\_fips%5B%5D=PK&start\\_year=2002&end\\_year=2020&group\\_by=location](https://cpj.org/data/reports.php?status=Imprisoned&cc_fips%5B%5D=PK&start_year=2002&end_year=2020&group_by=location)

The data provided by CPJ also showed that 5 Pakistani Journalists Munawar Mohsin imprisoned on January 29, 2001, Farhan Ahmed Bangash, locked up on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2013, Hafiz Husnain Raza, jailed on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2016, Daulat Jan Mathal, was arrested on October 2016 and Muhammad Qasim Qasmi detained on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2018. It is pertinent to

mention that during the same period, none of the journalists went missing in Pakistan (CPJ, 2020).

### Figures from UNESCO

In contrast to CPJ 28 Years data on killed journalists (See Table 3), according to UNESCO 73 journalists were killed in time span of 18 years ranging from 2002-2019. However, it is beyond the scope of the current study to challenge the sources of both organizations.

**Table 5: Media Violence Index from 2002 to 2019 Published in UNESCO Reports**

Year	No. of Journalists Killed	Year	No. of Journalists Killed
2002	2	2011	5
2003	0	2012	10
2004	1	2013	8
2005	2	2014	4
2006	2	2015	4
2007	1	2016	4
2008	4	2017	4
2009	3	2018	5
2010	11	2019	3

Total Journalists Killed From 2002-2019 = 73 in Pakistan  
Source: UNESCO (2002-2019)

Freedom of House published annual data regarding press freedom, legal and political environment, and with given rating criteria (See Table 6). Similarly, this organization also declared Pakistan as an unfit place for journalists to work (See Table 6).

**Table 6: Rating of Pakistan as per Press Status issued by the Freedom House**

Year	Press Freedom (0=Best, 100=Worst)	Legal environment (0=Best, 30=Worst)	Political Environment (0=Best, 40=Worst)	Economic development (0=Best, 30=Worst)	Press Status
2002	57	15	26	16	Partly Free
2003	58	17	25	16	-do-
2004	59	17	24	18	-do-
2005	61	18	25	18	Not Free
2006	61	18	25	18	-do-
2007	63	17	28	18	-do-
2008	66	20	29	17	-do-
2009	62	19	27	16	-do-
2010	61	19	26	16	-do-
2011	61	18	27	16	-do-
2012	63	18	29	16	-do-
2013	64	19	29	16	-do-
2014	64	19	29	16	-do-
2015	65	19	30	16	-do-
2016	64	19	29	16	-do-
2017	65	19	30	16	-do-

Source: <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2017/pakistan>

It is evident from the above-given table that in the years of 2002-2017, the position of Pakistan is inclined towards the negative. Press status during 2018 and 2019 is missing in the referred report published by the freedom house. The table indicates that the figure is above 50, indicating the worst situation in Pakistan (Freedom House, 2017).

Eight organizations from Pakistan were selected to compare the figures with international organizations. Three out of eight organizations are not maintaining or sharing the data on threats faced by Pakistani journalists.

Pakistan Press Foundation data was reproduced by All Pakistan Newspaper Society). This organization was founded in 1953. This figures published by this showed that 80 of journalists were either murdered or killed while working from 2001 to 2018

along with other categories of media violence in Pakistan (See Table 7). Province-wide data reflects that most of the journalists were killed in Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the said period. While, in Islamabad 2 persons were killed (See Table 8).

**Table 7: PPF Media Violence Index from 2001 to 2018 Published in APNS Reports**

Years	Detained	Abducted	Assaulted	Injured	Murdered	On duty Killed Journalists	Total Cases
2001	2	0	0	4	0	0	6
2002	1	1	0	3	2	0	7
2003	10	1	0	0	2	0	13
2004	2	1	1	3	1	0	8
2005	4	1	0	5	2	1	13
2006	5	2	3	14	2	1	27
2007	0	0	43	6	3	3	55
2008	2	4	2	11	5	1	25
2009	5	5	4	14	3	2	33
2010	5	2	7	15	5	8	42
2011	0	2	0	10	4	2	18
2012	0	1	3	25	5	2	36
2013	0	1	0	12	5	4	22
2014	2	0	6	1	7	0	16
2015	2	0	19	1	1	0	23
2016	0	3	0	10	1	0	14
2017	0	3	0	9	2	0	14
2018	0	9	30	5	6	0	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>422</b>

Source: Above mentioned information taken from the report on Safety of Media Workers (2015-2018) published by Pakistan Press Foundation

**Table 8: Province-wise Violence against Media from 2002 to 2016**

Regions	Detained	Abducte	Assaul	Injure	Kille	Murdere	Tota
Baluchistan	16	7	1	12	8	13	57
Sindh	6	3	40	66	2	14	131
Punjab	10	1	14	38	1	2	66
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	4	4	5	18	11	10	52
FATA	6	4	0	8	2	7	27
Islamabad	0	3	28	43	1	1	76
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>409</b>

Source: Above mentioned information taken from the report on Impunity for Crimes against Journalists in Pakistan (2016) Justice delayed and Justice Denied published by Pakistan Press Foundation

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) is also considered as one of prestigious organization working for human rights in the country. According to this organization, a total of 116 journalists were killed in Pakistan during 2002-2018.

**Table 9: Year-wise Killings of Journalists in Pakistan**

Year	Journalists killed	Year	Journalists killed
2002	Report Missing	2011	16
2003	02	2012	14
2004	Report Missing	2013	11
2005	-	2014	16
2006	Report Missing	2015	06
2007		2016	06
2008	09	2017	02
2009	08	2018	06
2010	20	<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>

Source: Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (2003-2018)

This organization provided clearer picture regarding the law and order situation in Pakistan. According to freedom network, 26 journalists were killed in 6 years. While the police registered 25 cases and ultimately, after the trial, none of the murderers was convicted (See Table 10).

**Table 10: Pakistan’s Impunity Scorecard available from 2013 to 2018**

Total Journalists killed	Cases Registered with Police	Charge sheet submitted to courts	Cases selected for prosecution	Trial Completed	Murders convicted	Murders Punished out of convicted
26	25	16	15	6	1	0

Source: adapted <http://www.fnpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Impunity-Scorecard.png>

While commenting the Media Protection Policy, Pakistan Broadcast Organization (2012) asserts such threats include physical abuse of the journalists and other staff members of any media organization. Their vehicles and other equipment have also been vandalized and attacked. Even in some cases, the journalists had been murdered. Cable operators are threatened to put the targeted channels off air or distort the audio/video frequency of the channels or to change the place of the channels at odd numbers. Sometimes, their cable networks are also cut off. However, this organization does not publish any data regarding media violence in Pakistan.

Although, this organization updates the website and highlighted other activities does not publish/maintain threats to media persons in Pakistan.

The prevailing situation portrayed by the above organizations has enabled the researchers to frame some safety measures, immediately needed to be implemented in this situation.

The above data indicates series of threats on journalists such as physical attacks, killings, kidnapping or getting missing, censorship, imprisonment, financial assault, and intimidations harassments. In this view, the researchers can suggest the following safety measures to be adopted by the media organizations, government and law enforcement agencies. The salaries of journalists not only be provided in time but also their salaries must be increased to avoid risks or any rare chance for wrong doings. Several national and international researches have pointed out that the job of journalists in Pakistan has become more difficult and dangerous. The media organizations should ensure the journalists to protect the families of injured or deceased journalists. Law and order departments must ensure prompt actions for providing justice to the innocent media persons. The government of Pakistan should frame favorable laws and policies for them in order to reduce fear against threats. They should be provided proper trainings before joining the media organization and minimum one refresher course should be arranged once in a year. Media organizations must provide safety kits to the journalists while discharging their duties especially in conflicting areas.

Furthermore, (Jamil, 2018) discussed that several organizations such as, press freedom indicators and United Nations Reporter without Borders and Freedom House proposed some legal, psychological physical, digital and financial protections of journalists. According to her, there are very inadequate steps adopted at national level by the Pakistani Government, unions of journalists and media organizations to encounter threats to journalists’ safety. Distinctly, some national

and international organizations have positively initiated some steps to promote safe journalism in Pakistan:

- The United Nations has given Plan of Action on Safety of Journalists for the promotion of safe journalism in Pakistan.
- A guidebook for the safety of Pakistani journalists particularly working in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
- The foundation of ‘Muhafiz’a project initiated by Media Matters for Democracy. It is a digital tool developed with cooperation with National Press Club Islamabad, Peshawar Press Club and Code for Pakistan. This tool provides information on threats to media and journalists in Pakistan (International News Safety Institute, 2014; The Express Tribune, 2015).
- Pakistan’s Journalists’ Safety Fund has been established to rescue the offended journalists and their immediate families.

More importantly, Department of Journalism and Psychology established a Trauma and Competence Centre in University of Peshawar. These upper mentioned initiatives are vital to promote the journalists safety in Pakistan (International Journalists’ Network, 2015). To sum, there is an insistent need to promote the safety of journalists and to encounter the prevailing impunity. On the other side, there is need for journalists to work on the principles of trust, truth, freedom, with accuracy and impartiality.

## CONCLUSION

Keeping the above facts and figures in view, it is evident Pakistan media workers are not safe while performing their professional duties. Some of the media persons can either mix up with the culprits and start yellow journalism, or some can hide the truth to safe themselves and their families and few of them would be discharging their duties in true letter and spirit. The focus of this study was to highlight the issues of journalists, reporters, correspondents, anchorpersons columnists and cameramen. This study is an endeavor to capture the attention of Government, practitioners, policy makers and media organizations to ensure the safety of the journalists for the betterment of the society. Law enforcement agencies must also play their role in the conviction of the criminals involved in the multiple attacks on the working journalists and media professionals. It will not only be helpful for the improvement of prevailing awful situation of the media persons but also for the betterment of the society. In addition, the media organizations should provide safety kits and proper trainings to the journalists for performing their duties. This research is based on secondary data only; therefore, future studies can be conducted through primary data from the media personnel to report their related concerns.

## References

- Ahmed, A. (2019). Journalism in Pakistan: A Risky Profession. Academic Track Reader., 144.
- Alam, M. A. (2015). Right to Information and Media Laws in Pakistan.
- Ali, G., & Shafiq, Z. (2019). Impact of Work Environment on Professional Integrity: A Case Study of Journalists in Islamabad. Global Regional Review.

- [https://doi.org/10.31703/grr.2019\(iv-iv\).25](https://doi.org/10.31703/grr.2019(iv-iv).25)
- Amnesty International. (2014). A Bullet Has Been Chosen for You' Attacks on Journalists in Pakistan.
- Baran, S. J., & Davis, D. K. (2015). Mass Communication Theory: Foundations, Ferment, and Future. In Cengage Learning. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446262467>
- Committee to Protect Journalists. (2015). Committee to Protect Journalists.
- CPJ. (2020). Committee to Protect Journalists. <https://cpj.org/2020/02/pakistani-journalist-murdered-after-warning-of-thr.php>
- Freedom House. (2017). Freedom of the Press. <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2017/pakistan>
- Hanan, M. A., Saleem, N., Ali, A., & Mukhtar, S. (2016). Role of Media in Strengthening Democracy in Pakistan. *Journalists' Perception. South Asian Studies*, 31(1), 1026–1678.
- Heinze, E., & Freedman, R. (2010). Public awareness of human rights: Distortions in the mass media. *International Journal of Human Rights*, 14(4), 491–523. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13642980802645804>
- HRCF. (2013). State of Human Rights in 2013. [www.hrcf-web.org](http://www.hrcf-web.org)
- International Federation of Journalists. (2013). Pakistan: The State of Journalism and Media in Balochistan Province 2011-2013. <https://www.ifj.org/>
- International Federation of Journalists. (2015). No. <https://www.ifj.org/>
- International Federation of Journalists. (2016). Breaking the walls: the fight for freedom of expression in the digital space in south asia.
- International Federation of Journalists. (2019). In the shadow of violence. In *Psychoanalytic Perspectives on the Shadow of the Parent*. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429451706-2>
- International Journalists' Network. (2015). Pakistani media leaders' compiles list of safety recommendations for journalists. <https://ijnet.org/en/blog/pakistani-media-leaderscompile-list-safety-recommendations-journalists>
- International News Safety Institute. (2014). Journalism Safety: Threats to Media Workers and Measures to Protect Them. <http://www.newssafety.org/uploads/Good Practice INSI Final Feb2014.pdf>
- International News Safety Institute. (2019). Journalism Safety: Threats to Media Workers and Measures to Protect Them. <http://www.newssafety.org/uploads/Good Practice INSI Final Feb2019.pdf>
- Jamil, S. (2018). Safety Threats, Impunity and Professionalism: Journalists' Dilemma in Pakistan. *Sociology and Anthropology*, 6(7), 571–578. <https://doi.org/DOI:10.13189/sa.2018.060702>
- Khan, A. (2010). Media in Balochistan: Blighted But A Brave New World Beckons. *Intermedia*.
- Khan, A. (2014). Journalists at work in FATA: an overview of consequences. *Tiagh. A Journal of Peace and Development*, 5, 45–61.
- Khan, U. (2016). Reporting is becoming a Life Threatening Profession in Pakistan. *Ma'ariff Research Journal*.
- Pak Institute for Peace Studies. (2014). Pakistan Security Report. <https://pakpips.com/web/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/sr2014.pdf%0D>
- Pakistan Broadcast Organization. (2012). Media Protection Policy. <https://pba.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/v1/uploads/623-pba.pdf>
- Ponkey, M. E. (2013). Attitude of Senior Journalists in Pakistan and Perception to the Modern and Traditional Journalism in Pakistan. *International Journal of Asian Social Science*, 2(9).
- Pye, L. W. (1963). Models of traditional, transitional, and modern communications systems. *Communications and Political Development*, 24–29.
- Riaz, S. (2015). Challenges to Rural Journalism in Pakistan. 9(2).
- Roensch, G., & Georgia, F. V. (2009). Cruel and Unusual Punishment. *Infobase Publishing*.
- SATP. (2015). South Asia Terrorism Portal Opt. Cit.
- Shahzad, K. (2019). The Evolution of Muslim Press in Punjab ( From the Early Beginning to the 1947 ). 2(56), 37–48.
- Siraj, S. A. (2009). Critical analysis of press freedom in Pakistan. *Journal Media and Communication Studies*, 1(3), 43–47. <http://www.academicjournals.org/jmcs>
- Stewart, A. G. (2013). The Birth of Mass Media: Printmaking in Early Modern Europe. *Companion to Renaissance and Baroque Art*, A, 251–274. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118391488.ch12>
- The Express Tribune. (2015, November 27). Safety for journalists: First ever digital threat-reporting system. <http://tribune.com.pk/story/999223/safety-for-journalists-first-ever-digitalthreat-reporting-system/>
- UNESCO. (2019). #KeepTruthAlive Media toolkit Campaign 2019.