



Freedom in Journalism: Analyzing the Current Media System in Bangladesh and Its Impact on Journalists' Job Satisfaction

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Abstract

This article outlines Bangladesh's media industry's present system and trends. The media landscape is digitizing and changing, including a new interactive media system. Beyond that, Bangladesh's media industry maintains the corporate liaison along with the instructions of political parties. Sometimes, the substantial facts get changed following different instructions and censorship from several authorities. Aiming at these current situations, this study attempts to analyze the significant current media system and Freedom prevailing in the working environment within the media industry. As a deductive study, a theoretical framework, including Hallin and Mancini's Three Models of Media, has been followed. This study has also analyzed the job satisfaction among the current journalists and media professionals regarding Bangladesh's environment and media system following Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory of job satisfaction. In this study, we also analyzed job satisfaction among journalists and the relevant media system as an essential factor in their professional fulfilment.

Keywords: Media system; Censorship; Digitization; Job satisfaction; Media professionals

Background of the Study

Media systems and job satisfaction among journalists have always been inextricably linked. The media system in a country defines an overall environment to practice journalism in a particular context. Bangladesh has been experiencing a media boom since 2000 with the adaptation of a free market economy [1]. The constitution of this democratic country itself approves the Freedom of expression and the Freedom of the press (Legislative and Parliamentary Affairs Division, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, 2019). Here, every citizen has the right to Freedom of speech and expression, and the press has the same Freedom. At the same time, a liberal market policy is subsisting by inaugurating

various conglomerates and numerous media houses under these big corporations. According to a recent report by Riaz and Rahman, Bangladesh owns 45 private TV channels, 28 FM, 32 community radio stations, 1,248 daily newspapers, and more than 100 online news portals [2]. Though the constitution and free market policy permit media freedom, on the other hand, multiple persecutions and threats to the journalists stipulate the lack of Freedom along with the security of these professionals. Saad Hammadi, South Asia Campaigner at Amnesty International said that "Journalists in Bangladesh are being silenced under the draconian Digital Security Act" [3]. Since our independence in 1971, the political system has faced many changes and challenges. Moreover, low job satisfaction is likely to have an impact on the quality of journalism.

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Bangladesh's media system has already been through significant changes and difficult situations. Especially during COVID-19, the other challenges, including ownership ideology, business group ideology, and political, financial, and different types of threats, pose a significant threat to journalism and job satisfaction. Because of these challenges and threats, even with a 24/7 commitment to ideal journalism, ensuring the overall safety and promising offerings for journalists has become arduous. Therefore, this paper finds job satisfaction among journalists depending on Bangladesh's current media system. Additionally, this paper tries to analyze the possible scopes and opportunities for investigative journalism in the upcoming days.

Literature Review

To specify the current media system of Bangladesh, the argument of John Merrill can be mentioned. The media scholar John Merrill in 1990 said, "No media system is completely libertarian or authoritarian. It varies from the political system of different countries as well as the relationship between the authority and media house". The media system of a country also changes constantly with time and different political situations [4]. International reports showed that the government interferes in media affairs in Bangladesh by controlling what to publish, taking away censorship, and some disputable laws. On the other hand, the country has faced military regimes in different periods after its independence. The media was bound to follow the autocratic commands from the authority. All these commands and indirect control refer to the authoritarian media system in Bangladesh. The political elites also impose their agendas on the media house. These things also indicate the absence of a total libertarian structure in the media. But is the media industry of Bangladesh totally an absentee of libertarian arrangement? The recent scenario in Bangladeshi media houses demonstrated authoritarian behaviour on several occasions, particularly during COVID-19. In a paper by Islam & Yousuf, Safi mentioned: "Reports on international media indicate that Bangladesh government often interferes in media's affairs by telling them what to publish—an authoritarian technique to control media" [5]. Unearthed in his report that there was a significant drop in newspaper publication in Bangladesh during the first phase of the coronavirus pandemic [6]. Only eighty-six newspapers were published from the country's eight divisional towns and affiliated districts. According to DFP records, 340 newspapers were officially published in these divisional towns and districts, with 254 newspapers closing at the time. In the report, there are also some glimpses of journalists' conditions at that time. "The professional lives, and livelihood of journalists, under the coronavirus circumstances, have become more precarious than ever before. The newspaper industry is going through a crisis, riddled with lay-offs, irregular payment of wages, and mounting arrears".

Bangladesh is one of the countries where the constitution guarantees freedom of the press. But the terms' Freedom of expression and Freedom of the press seem elusive here. Bangladesh is one of the South Asian developing countries that rejected authoritarian regimes through diverse protests and student movements. It has also liberal economic policy, in turn, and has been observing a media boom since the 2000s. At present, there are 32 television channels operating, including 4 state-owned channels, 26 renowned newspapers, and 32 Bengali radio stations [7]. With the technological expansion, Bengali media is inaugurating online news sites that have been attracting an audience for its technological digitization. But still, the freedom of the press and the expression of different opinions cannot be ensured by governments. Sometimes the political parties directly prosecute journalists from different media houses, enact legislation, and shackle media freedom. Even the media houses must depend on the political parties to get licenses to operate a media channel. Shutting down media channels and newspapers of the opposite party by the ruling one is one of the common scenarios in Bangladesh in the era of every government. Another concerning threat to journalists has recently emerged from the Digital Security Act. Kamruzzaman discovered According to a report by the media rights organization Freedom of Expression, Bangladesh (FExB), nearly two dozen journalists in Bangladesh have been attacked, intimidated, harassed, or arrested for reporting on pilfering corruption, and a lack of accountability in food aid meant for poor people since March 26, 2020, while some experts and government officials saw this rule as having benefits against false and fabricated information, those who adhere to the country's privacy laws and refrain from violating the media's rules of conduct and refrain from disseminating false and fabricated news in an effort to confuse the public and disturb peace won't be subjected to harassment under this law [8]. Even though many media houses do not own a specific policy or written guidebooks, these houses operate their organogram and activities following the guidance of ruling political parties and the media conglomerates of Bangladesh. Journalists often get threats and restrictions that hinder their activities and responsibilities. Four of ten journalists think their channels maintain neutrality except for gatekeeping. All these refer to the fact that the Bangladeshi media system is not maintaining a libertarian approach. At the same time, the media industry is on the way to digitization and expansion. That indicates the liberal economic policy of this country. Eight out of ten journalists mentioned their neutrality in covering news beyond any political support, which is an approach that Bangladesh has been demonstrating libertarian over time. All these show that Bangladesh is following the middle of both the libertarian and authoritarian approaches.

In 2011 a report on Bangladesh by Freedom House addressed the country as a 'Partly free' one. The result was also the same as the



report of Reporters without Borders claiming that Bangladesh ranks 126th out of 178th countries in terms of media freedom. It is also mentioned that though this country is a democratic one with a guarantying constitution of Freedom of expression there prevail different draconian laws that control the media industry as a form of ruling party government. Incidents included the closure of the party oppositional newspaper Amar Desh; the editor Mahmudur Rahman was also arrested. Other private TV stations including Channel I and Jamuna TV had also been taken off the air by the ruling government quoting license issues. Local media and journalists face more risk than national media professionals. Often, physical threats and closure from business conglomerates, local administrators, criminals, and Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) police obstruct the activities of journalists [9]. Numerous reports on international media referred to the fact that the government of Bangladesh commonly interferes with media activities by commanding what should be covered as news and what should not. Ownership of a media house license, including a television channel or online news site, fundamentally depends on one's loyalty to the ruling government. The right to issue a license for a television channel was first established during the BNP regime of 2001-2006. A total of ten loyal television channel owners got licenses at that time. On the other hand, the BNP government shut down numerous media that opposed the ruling party. The same approach was also observed during the ruling period of the Awami League from 1996 to 2001. To emphasize the Act of 1973 of Printing Presses and Publication, probation of oath was inserted in this law only to force the publisher or printer not to hold his pen against the interest of the governing political party. This frame of state indicates the undemocratic behaviour of a democratic government.

In terms of getting government funds and other shares along with advertisements, it gets rigid for the media house that tends to publish or broadcast news content critical to government development and policy. In recent years, many media houses get rid of their dependency on the share and funds provided by the government. Now, they are getting funds to continue their profit through advertisements from several conglomerates. But this dependency also creates another boundary for the media houses where the corporate commands the role of authority. If anything goes against the giant corporation, then the same censorship or threats are given to the media to have their own. In current Bangladesh, many of these conglomerates are systemizing their own media houses where journalists and editors struggle to represent the authentic truth. Moreover, these corporate brands are taking their positions in administration and political parties. Investigative reports on corruption, crime, nepotism, financial clarity, and development issues face obstacles to getting coverage from different levels, including the prime authority government and its alliance. Many journalists face threats in these cases, and some were killed, though the legislative system is indifferent to

taking proper initiatives. In terms of developing media systems, conducted a study that concluded that media systems could be developed similarly in the same European regions based on this statement, researcher tried to find out in his study whether it worked as in East Asia (Japan, South Korea, and the People's Republic of China) too. Compared the media systems of China, Japan, and South Korea using Roger Blum's extended comparison approach. Researchers discovered that Japan's and South Korea's political systems and cultures were democratic and ambivalent, whereas China had an authoritarian political system and concordant political culture [10,11]. This study discovered that there was occasional censorship in Japan and South Korea, but in China, there was occasional but sometimes permanent censorship. Regarding media ownership, Japan has a private and public owner system, whereas South Korea has a reverse owner system. Furthermore, media ownership in China is entirely transparent. Another significant difference is that Japan has middle political parallelism, whereas South Korea and China have active strong political parallelism. Three ambivalent countries have similar media cultures. The researcher also discussed media orientation broadly in his study, whereas Japan's media orientation works commercially, whereas South Korean and Chinese media orientations are divergent.

What is the Situation of the Media Policy Landscape?

Article 39(1) of the Constitution of Bangladesh ensures Freedom of thought and conscience (The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 1972). Article 39(2) confirms the freedom of speech and expression and guarantees the freedom of the press subject to sensible restrictions imposed by law. Here, 'sensible' restrictions appear subjective and can be utilized selectively by numerous groups to serve their interests. Again, different legislative changes like the Right to Information Act (RTI) of 2009 and the Governmental step in 2010 to issue an arrest warrant against journalists, editors, and writers in defamation cases [12]. The Act of Printing Presses and Publication of 1973 requires not publishing anything that goes against the interest of the state and the Government of Bangladesh (The Printing and Publications, Declaration and Registration Act, 1973). The 124A section of the Bangladesh Penal Code introduces that a person can be punished with imprisonment for three years or a fine if s/he conveys any dissatisfaction or disloyalty and enmity against the government or state as described in the provision [13]. Another Section of 505(b) of the same law refers to a punishment of seven years imprisonment or fine or even expressing any content against the state. These sections of the Bangladesh Penal Code prohibit reporting or expression against authority in this democratic sovereignty. A similar command is found in Section 505(A) where



steps against Freedom of expression, thought, and opinion are mentioned. According to Section 99(A) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, the government has the right to charge any publication if it is defamatory to the state authority including the President, Prime Minister, and Speaker of Parliament. The Special Powers Act of 1974 also allows journalists to be held up for 90 days without trial like any other citizens [14]. Another rightful body controlled by the government, The Bangladesh Press Council, issued a Code of Conduct in 1993, which was amended later in 2002 and highlighted the fundamental roles and responsibilities of a journalist and reporter, stating that any media house must not publish any kind of content that goes against national integrity, sovereignty, or independence of Bangladesh. This press council of Bangladesh cannot work as a free organization. International Press Institute published a report in 2009 stating that all the Press Council members of Bangladesh were elected directly by the government and its wings. Also, this organization never mentions the needed funds for the media houses that the government should allocate.

Job Satisfaction among Journalists

Yu conducted a study on job satisfaction by reviewing 41 published articles in the journalism field [15]. She attempted to investigate how the job satisfaction term has been applied as a new theoretical framework in journalism. Also, if there is any correlation between the article's publication dates and other independent variables such as intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence job satisfaction alias job dissatisfaction [16]. Though the field and nature of journalism study have shifted from a profit-driven to a value-driven occupation from time to time, it now has a more sophisticated term as a profession with multiple dimensions: public service, objectivity, autonomy, immediacy, and ethics. Professionals in this field appear to be content with their jobs if the intrinsic factors known as journalism's professional values are met. These values, which include extraordinary autonomy, associations, licensure, and ethics codes, serve as motivators for job satisfaction while also granting professionals the authority to regulate themselves more specific explanations for intrinsic factors include autonomy, creativity, variation, contacts, intellectual challenge, control, and so on; however, extrinsic factors such as prestige, social commitment, pay, work hours, stress, company values, and goals must also be met because these are required factors for job security for every professional. The researcher discussed at the end of the study that media management study was a common term in management fields, but in journalism fields, along with the study of job satisfaction, the group of similar concepts, terms, and meanings are still under construction, as well as in the developing phase. Sing and Sharma conducted a study like the one mentioned above, reviewing empirical research on job satisfaction among minority journalists working in various countries. Researchers discovered in the literature review that there is a disparity in race

and ethnicity among all age groups working in media houses in the United States. The same was true for the Indian media house, where people came from various minority groups based on religion, tribe, and caste. When it comes to newsroom diversity, media companies are mostly concerned with upper castes. Journalists vs. the Rest of the Journalists in India. Numerous reports about caste disparity researchers are discussed in this study. Based on all literature reviews and reports, the study discovered that minor journalists are treated more slowly than the superior group, gradually increasing low job satisfaction among minors. Ireri studied 96 Kenyan journalists to learn about their demographic backgrounds, job satisfaction, working conditions, and use of technology [17]. The findings revealed that 69% of journalists were satisfied with their jobs, while among some indicators such as income, security, work experience, Freedom in the workplace, and education, income was the main predictor of job satisfaction, and most of the satisfied journalists were male. When media ownership, advertising forces, and editorial policies were identified as the main constraints, the researcher discovered that some factors hampered journalistic freedoms. In his study, the researcher also discusses the Kenyan media system. In his literature review, he asserted some scholars on this, whereas Ali discussed the finding of Mbeke, who stated that the Kenyan media system served as a staunch defender of good governance and democracy. Mbeke also stated that today's Kenyan mass media landscape, combined with a four-tier system of private, community, quasi-community, and public media [18]. Rafe observed that in recent years, job uncertainty has become a threat to Freedom for many journalists working in media houses in Bangladesh [19]. There is always the threat of termination and irregular wages. According to Saiful Alam, president of the Bangladeshi Press Club, the country's largest journalist organization, "Bangladesh's media sector is going through a critical time; many offices have reportedly terminated employees and many television stations decided to close news departments" also stated that the unstable maintenance of wages and other costs by media owners for journalists gradually promotes financial constraints that limit journalists' Freedom. So, where is the problem? In response to this question, observed that experts in this field have discovered the crisis and stated that 'the Bangladeshi media sector is suffering is multi-dimensional. A few interrelated factors pushed Bangladesh's media into this state, including political and economic influences'.

Hallin and Manchini's Three Models of Media

Criticizing the 'Four theories of the press', media scholars Daniel C. Hallin and Paolo Manchini developed different press models in their book, *Comparing Media Systems* in 2004 [20-22]. It is one of the most quoted books referring to existing media systems in the European and Atlantic countries. They focused on the existing media systems following the political systems and press Freedom

of different countries. They reviewed sixteen Western European countries and the United States, and Canada. After examining the media system of these countries both scholars developed three different media models, including-

1. **Polarized Pluralistic Model:** Basically found in the Mediterranean countries including Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and France. As a result, circulation and financial support remain limited to run a free press system. Here, the press works for the elite members of society rather than the mass audience. Press Freedom along with the commercialization of the media, is new in this system. The state is the actual owner, organizer, and provider of all kinds of funds. The control is highly centralized in the electronic-based media content of the government, political parties, and elite society.
2. **Democratic Corporatist Model:** Northern European countries, including Belgium, Finland, Austria, Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, and Germany, follow this system of media. Here the elite-oriented press circulation is not emphasized. The real importance is given to the masses, who are the real audience of this model. These countries have been following this democratic model from the early period, which is also supported strongly by the state and government. There can also be seen as a co-existence of commercialization which labelled this system as a corporatist model. However this corporate culture did not harm the roles and activities of the press to work for the mass audience and reflect the existing political division in society. This indicates organized media professionals' 'professionalism' and neutrality.
3. **Liberal Model:** This model is found in North Atlantic countries like the United Kingdom, the United States, Ireland, and Canada. The press is dominated by commercial organizations rather than political control. The broadcast system is separated from the state control. Journalism in this system tends to follow professionalism, but there is a lack of organized information-based journalists. Though press circulation is not elite-oriented, a vulnerable connection between the mass and media can be marked.

Beyond this Comparing Media Systems

It was 2004 when both media scholars developed these three media models in their books 'Comparing Media System', 2004. Eight years later in 2012, they established their second book on the same topic 'Comparing Media Systems beyond Western World' where they have shown that it is impossible to develop solid media systems following a country's present political and commercialization. Moreover, this system continuously changes with time and different conditions that arise at different times. As an example, Adrian Hadland, another scholar in communication and media, referred to South Africa's media model. South Africa

maintains all the features of three different media models. If we analyze the media system and its culture in Bangladesh, it is unsustainable to draw specifically among the three models. Also, it is not certain to specify between the libertarian and authoritarian media models that are developed in the Four Models of Press.

Fredrick Herzberg's Motivation Hygiene Theory of Job Satisfaction

The term job satisfaction is not a specific idea that determines an employee's satisfaction in his work with the same perspective (Yu, 2021). During the post-war time from 1945 to the 1960s, this term started to become admired and rational. In that post-war era scholars observed that a trend among employers started to pursue the motivation and most importantly the self-esteem of the employees by providing them some significant opportunities. Different kinds of opportunities for employers are common in our present time, like scopes for self-advancement, assuring job security, employee achievement, recognition, and a healthy job environment. All these opportunities determine how an individual worker would own his/her profession and evaluate his/her responsibilities compared to the recognition. Fredrick Herzberg, a psychologist, approached this theory of job satisfaction in 1959, explicitly identifying factors alias opportunities that motivate the workers. Before Herzberg, Abraham Maslow constructed the theory of 'Hierarchy of Needs' in 1954 where the recognition of 'Self-esteem' and 'Self Actualization' is mentioned with importance. Maslow, a behavioural scientist, approached this theory of an upward pyramid where both self-esteem and self-actualization are given at the top, which means the fourth and fifth stages among the five factors, including physiological, security, and self-recognition. From both concepts constructed by Herzberg and Maslow, we can see that the common factor of a person's satisfaction relies on his or her own esteem and actualization. Regarding that factor, Fredrick Herzberg developed this two-dimensional paradigm where some factors like interpersonal relations among co-workers, guidance, management of that job, working environment, technological advancement, financial, societal, and personal security have been indicated. All these factors create a hygienic working environment where an employee can work with feeling the proximity to the working station. On the contrary, if these required factors remain absent, it creates an unhygienic environment and, thus, dissatisfaction. Herzberg specified five hygienic factors that can keep an employee satisfied. These five factors are- 1) Accomplishment; 2) Identification/ Recognition; 3) Nature of that work- administration, management, bureaucracy, work allotment, interpersonal communication among the employers; 4) Responsibilities and 5) Development/ Advancement- it can be personal advancement as well as the organizations. These factors work as 'Motivators' and create some

long-term positive impacts. Later, these 'Motivators' were significantly addressed differently and were given more importance than some general hygienic factors, as Herzberg observed that hygienic elements can only satisfy an employee for a fixed time. But these are unable to create long-term satisfaction. Thus, the mentioned five factors can enhance advancement and extended satisfaction. In this study, these five motivators have been implied and evaluated from the perspectives of senior and experienced journalists in Bangladesh. In the media and journalism profession, these motivators can be evaluated in all these decades of media industry advancement, characteristics and an increasing number of audiences, the impact of religion, management, and application of laws, and most importantly the change of political system thus the change of media system in Bangladesh. Following the above-mentioned theories, this research has been conducted.

Research Questions: In this study, the research questions are,

1. What is the present scenario of job satisfaction among journalists?
2. What is the current media system in Bangladesh?
3. What is the impact of this media system on journalists' job satisfaction?

Method

Selection of the participants and making questions

Both qualitative and quantitative approaches have been followed in this study. Six veteran journalists (n=6) have been selected through purposive sampling. All of them have been considered because of the diversity in their experience of working in various media houses and observing different changes in the political regime as well as the ownership and media system in Bangladesh. Principal factors like the scope of covering a challenging report, conducting the investigative reports, security for media professionals, application, and implementation. The veteran journalists were selected in purposive sampling as participants from the different media houses. As this study was conducted in 2020, in-depth interviews were conducted via the online platform Zoom due to maintaining the Covid-19 protocols and the convenience for the participants. All interviews have been recorded along with the interviewees' age, gender, current employment with designation, tenure of work experience in the media, and job responsibilities with their consent. Open-ended and flexible questions were used. The first author was the primary note taker for keeping verbal notes. The non-verbal responses have been observed and noted down. This was done because the topic of this study is sensitive from the perspective of Bangladesh. Besides, some journalists are allies of different political parties. Thus, the non-verbal notes would help code and add results with latent messages. The second author was the interviewer to asked questions to all the participants. Otherwise, it would be difficult for

the note-taker to listen and observe simultaneously when the interview sessions were going on in Zoom. Overall, this discussion followed a semi-structured approach so that participants could add their experiences and opinions without any restrictions so that they could feel free. An online survey has been conducted on 100+ (n=100<) media professionals, including reporters, senior reporters, photojournalists, and sub-editors from every media beat. Journalists and media workers have been selected from different experience levels to give an overall picture of how dissatisfaction works in every position and phase and the different reasons for having this discontent. We hypothesized that it might add a finding of a journalist with a minimum working experience of 2+ years and is also dissatisfied like the sub-editor who might have been working for around 8+ years. Thus, it would help to get a clear picture of the current media system and its dissatisfying impact on journalists. While conducting the survey, the gender ratio was tried to maintain, though results show that the ratio between male and female journalists has been 60% and 40%. We tried to conduct the survey on 20-35+ aged media professionals. It was done on a purposive sample-based approach.

Procedure

At the very first stage of selecting the participants, they were asked for consent. As a sensitive topic for the research, all the demographics as well as the group discussions, were kept private. The participants have been informed about the sensitivity of the research topic and approval of their consent. Also, verbal consent was recorded on the Zoom platform while the interviews were being conducted. Besides, a written form of consent was also provided to them with their authorized signature for security purposes. It was requested at the very beginning of the in-depth interviews that all the discussion be kept only in this room, and it would be better if participants did not share the information outside. Confidentiality was assured with the journalists by not identifying their names and designations, which could be easily identified during data analysis. Priority was focused on their privacy, psychological comfort, and environmental comfort while conducting the in-depth interviews. Still, some of them experienced psychological discomfort while describing or reflecting on a few sensitive questions.

Data Analysis

This has been a deductive study as the theoretical framework has been followed here. As this study followed the qualitative analyses, the thematic analysis with its standard guidelines was followed. To achieve data saturation, we were thinking of recruiting more participants but during the last and sixth interviews, information started to repeat. Here, themes have been categorized until they got repetitive. Coding, defining, reviewing, and naming the themes

was also done in this thematic analysis. The researchers assigned all data items gathered under specific codes to sum up the participants' responses. When this first stage of coding was done, these codes were reviewed and finally organized under the main

themes as well as the sub-themes. Overall, in this current study, thematic analysis has been adequate to categorize particular themes about the current media environment and journalists' job satisfaction.

Table 1: The name of the media houses journalists used to work.

Bangladesh Sangbad	Prothom alo	Daily Shomoyer Alo
Sangstha	Shomoy TV	ETV online
Boishaki TV	The Business Standard	Independent TV
British Broadcasting corporation	Daily star	Jamuna TV
DBC	The financial express	News24.com
Daily Amader Shomoy	Bangle tribune	Banik Barta
	Bdnews24.com	Newsbangla24.com
Source: own processing, 2022		

Table 2: The other challenges or pressures journalists had to face from the media house.

Other challenges	Other challenges
1. inefficiency in news management and field-level work	15. giving priority to some specific groups of reporters
2. Challenges facing off with colleagues of others beat.	16. setting story target per month
3. promotion with biases rather than quality	17. humiliating juniors
4. No ethics practice.	18. urban centralized coverage
5. Owner choices	19. Cliche approached controversy and stereotypes.
6. lack of facility for a working mother	20. No salary structure.
7. pressure from different business groups	21. lack of holidays
8. scarcity of efficient leadership	22. no technological advancement
9. less emphasis on multi-media journalism	23. political control, misinformation
10. absences of skill development training for journalists	24. social media and mainstream media news conflict
11. emphasizing more quantity than quality	25. no working environment
12. Limited or sometimes no budget for in-depth and investigative journalism.	26. making of biased story on demand of the boss
13. absences of fact-checking and fake news or hoax detection mechanism	27. lack of insufficient market evaluation
14. In house politics	28. Afraid to take challenges.
	29. Giving no choice preferences
	30. Journalists are doing PR duties.
	31. news killing

Survey Data Analysis

Journalists' experiences in media houses

Length of service at the media houses

This study discusses the timeline of media workers working in media houses. A major percentage of service is around 10 years, whereas there's a greater number of journalists whose work length spans from almost 11 to 25 years in media fields. The study found 62.5% of journalists have experience in media houses for at least 5 to 10 years. The second close percentage, 20% reveals the number of journalists who have been working in media houses for 11 to 15 years. There are also some journalists (12.5%) who have 16 to 20

years of media experience comparatively. The last percentage of 5% shows that only a few journalists have 20 to 25 years of work length in media houses. Most of the journalists in this study work in the TV, print, and online portals, respectively—also, some work at more than one media house at a time. Findings also showed that 35.90% of the journalists work in TV media houses. On the other hand, two close percentages of journalists work in print (33.30%) and online portals (30.80%) houses, respectively. Only 10.30% of journalists work in more than one medium comparatively. The study found that journalists work in different media houses. The following table (1) shows the mentioned media houses by journalists in the survey (Table 1).

Changes and challenges in media houses

Observing changes in the ownership of media during the working tenure

Most journalists did not find any ownership changes during their working period. Among them, some observed ownership changes during the whole time of their job. A handful of journalists were confused that there might be ownership changes in the media houses, but they were unaware of it. Findings showed that 57.5% of journalists found no changes in ownership in the media houses, while 32.50% stated that they observed changes during their whole working time. On the contrary, only 10% of journalists answered neutral.

Types of obstacles journalists observed in the ownership changing period

Journalists were asked if they found any obstacles during ownership changes. The study observes the journalists who found ownership changes during their work and said that there were some obstacles they had to face. The results of changing ownership brought out some crises, like full of Freedom, harassment, censorship, editorial policies, threats, and less security in independent journalism. According to the findings of the survey, there are some obstacles stated by journalists that prove the complex situation for independent journalism. Most journalists, 51.60%, found less Freedom of expression and a more controlled environment in media houses. The second-highest percentage (41.90%) of journalists found more censorship in media houses than before; most of the time, it could be self-censorship not to write a story. 38.70% of journalists encountered obstacles due to different editorial policies regarding report publishing. Of the close percentages, 32.30% of journalists hunted harassment by different laws and acts. On the other hand, the same percentage (22.60%) of journalists observed two obstacles respectively, one is different threats from particular authorities and groups, and the other is less security than in previous times whereas the security is related to financial and job aspects; threatening; measurements to protect journalists from the media house, etc.

The political influences journalists observed in the media houses

Journalists were asked about the political influences they observed in their working tenure in media houses. They named some patterns of factors in political influence, such as the threat from political groups, ideological influence, news compromising, and promoting political persons or groups. A remarkable number of journalists supported all the mentioned political influencing factors. This study revealed that 34.20% of journalists observed ideological influences in media houses during a specific political regime. In

their working tenure, 28.90% of journalists observed political compromise in news, while 23.60% of journalists observed direct and indirect political threats in media houses. 13.20% of journalists observed promoting any particular political group or person in news and media houses. Also, a remarkable number of journalists (28.90%) pointed out all the mentioned political factors together and agreed that these factors influence the news.

The internal challenges that journalists had to face in the work environment

Along with the political influences, this study found some internal challenges that journalists had to face in their working environment. The most important challenge that has been stated is the lack of job security. The following big concerns are insufficient salary, excessive workloads, and threats imposed by media houses. There is also a lack of important facilities that need to be addressed. According to the findings, a substantial chunk of percentages, 64.10% of journalists, said they had suffered from job insecurity. The second one is the tension of having a sufficient salary, whereas 56.40% of journalists already faced it in media houses. 46.2% of journalists found excessive workloads, whereas only 5.10% were threatened most of the time in media houses. 35.90% of journalists mentioned some important facilities they are deprived of. These include leave, transportation, other financial benefits, etc.

The other challenges or pressures journalists had to face in the media houses

Rather than internal challenges, journalists pointed out various kinds of challenges, which have become more challenging in recent times. These are focused on the below (Table 2).

The basic needs that journalist want from their office to secure job satisfaction

Dealing with lots of challenges every day in media houses, journalists always seek basic needs from their houses, which is mostly associated with job satisfaction. Most journalists think only a sufficient and regular salary can secure job satisfaction. Other necessary elements are work motivation, flexible working time, a friendly working zone, and ensuring basic leave. According to the findings, most journalists (80%) want a sufficient and regular salary as their basic need in their work. The second need, stated by journalists, is motivation, which costs 40%. The other needs, such as flexible working time, friendly working zone, and basic leave, have the same percentages for every time, is 37.5% stated by journalists.

Observing job disparities among co-workers

Very often, journalists are found to claim that there exist disparities among co-workers in media houses sometimes. Among the factors,

gender disparity is at the top of responses. Others are political and family allies. Religion also plays a factor in this regard. Sometimes, the community-based disparity has been observed in media houses. Findings showed that half of the number of journalists (50%) observed gender disparity among co-workers in media houses. Among the total journalists, the same percentage of journalists (35.70%) found political and family allies among co-workers, respectively. 10.70% of journalists found conflict and disparity based on religion among co-workers. A rare percentage of journalists (7.10%) observed community-based disparity among co-workers in media houses.

Training or workshop opportunities to engage journalists with industry advancement

Journalists were asked about the training or workshop opportunities that they were getting from their houses. The responses revealed that they had attended an exceptionally dwindling number of training programs. However, among the journalists, more than half of them agreed that they got training and workshop opportunities from their media houses. An important number of journalists also insisted that there is no opportunity to engage themselves with training or workshops. A remarkable number of journalists felt the importance of training to engage them with media advancement, but they must pursue hard for this. Some of them found the least time for these opportunities. Findings revealed that 52.5% said that their media houses provided various kinds of training, sometimes workshop opportunities to engage them with media advancement. On the other hand, 32.50% disagreed that they found no opportunities like these. Ten percent of journalists thought it was so competitive, whereas 5% hardly found time to pursue these opportunities. The study also found, in response to another question, journalists revealed that they have attended some training programs in the country and abroad, but the number is not satisfactory. Forty-five percent of journalists said that they still attended below 5 training and workshop programs. 37.5% of journalists attended 5 to 10 programs, 7.5% of journalists attended 10 to 15 programs, and only 10% of them attended more than 15 training programs so far in their whole working time.

Addressing current working media houses by journalists

From the perspective of disseminating valuable information and news, most journalists addressed their current working media house moderately. A remarkable number of them thought the best-working media, ahead of every house. While the least number of journalists thought their house was low. The study found 56.40% of journalists said that their media house provided moderate working ability to disseminate vital information and news, whereas 38.5% thought their media house was better than others. The least number of them, 5.10%, thought their media house maintained low ability in comparison.

Concern regarding different laws, acts, and regulations for media

Most of the journalists showed that they are likely to stay more concerned regarding different laws, acts, and regulations for media. But sometimes, these acts and regulations can create panic and self-censorship in journalists and their co-workers. Findings showed that this is so obvious that more than half of the journalists, 58%, are concerned about the media's laws, acts, and regulations. Also, 38% of them have concerns but with some confusion. On the other hand, only 5% of journalists have little knowledge about the laws, acts, and regulations of media. The study also found that 43.6% of journalists think that imposing acts and regulations on journalists can create panic and self-censorship frequently, but 7.70% said it could happen very frequently. Compared to that, 43.6% of journalists think attributing these rules can create panic occasionally. On the other hand, 5.10% of journalists indicated that imposing these acts hardly can create panic or self-censorship among them.

The current media system/ environment

Though a remarkable number of journalists pointed out the current scenario of the media system and considered that this system plays a barrier to Freedom of work, most of the journalists thought the current media system or environment needs to be modified with more flexibility. The very lowest number of journalists thought the system was flexible and good. According to the findings, 33% of journalists thought current media systems are a barrier to Freedom of work, whereas half of the journalists gave their criticism about the system. They think the current system should be modified with more flexibility. On the other hand, only 13% seem to have positive thinking about the media system.

Satisfaction within the current media environment

The study found that compared to satisfied journalists, the same number of journalists are also dissatisfied with the current media environment. Some are strongly satisfied and some are dissatisfied with the current media system. Though some journalists stayed neutral, the overall findings did not show positive and satisfactory thinking toward the media system. Findings revealed that 28.20% of journalists are satisfied with the current media system, compared to them, also the same percentage (28.20%) of journalists said that they are not satisfied. 5.10% of journalists showed strong satisfaction, while 2.60% strongly showed dissatisfaction. The important thing is that 35.90% of journalists stayed neutral regarding this matter.

Impact of the Current Media system ensuring job Satisfaction among the journalists



The most important finding is that most journalists have negative views about the possibility of the current media system ensuring job satisfaction among journalists in the future. Compared to the biggest percentages, only the least number of journalists think the current media system might ensure job satisfaction among journalists in the future. The alarming fact is that no one is on the positive side about the current media system in Bangladesh. The study showed that 87.5% of the journalists said that the current media system would not ensure job satisfaction, security, and satisfaction among the journalists in the future, while only 12.5% have a confused mind about this matter. No one thinks positively about this matter.

Findings and Discussions of Quantitative Survey

The working span of journalists

The working span of journalists in any media house is a particularly important discussion for this study. Because, based on the work span, this study searched for other things, such as media changes and challenges, current media system, and job satisfaction. The study found that only a few numbers of journalists, 5%, have up to 25 years of experience in journalism, while most of the journalists (62.50%) studied here have 5 to 10 years of working experience. Among them, some journalists have other working spans sighted in the study. While discussing the working experiences, the study found that most of the journalists are working in different media houses (Table 1); TV (35.90%), print (33.30%), and online portals (30.80%) respectively.

Changes and challenges in media houses

In the media world, journalists are destined to face challenges for the betterment of their job. Throughout the study, it demands that the journalists be asked how much ownership changes in the media houses they observed and what kinds of challenges they had to face in media houses during their working tenure. In response to the questions in this study, some of the journalists (32.50%) have observed ownership changes, but most of them (57.50%) did not find any ownership changes in the media houses. Among them, some (10%) doubt that it may exist. The finding shows that some journalists still found this kind of change in media houses. Following this, journalists were also asked if they found any obstacles or challenges during ownership changes. The study found that the journalists who found ownership changes during their work faced some challenges during their working tenure. Among them, 51.6% said that media houses offer limited and less Freedom of expression, 32.3% pointed out the harassment of laws and acts, 41.9% found strict censorship, 38.70% barriers to editorial policies, 22.60% threats from different authorities and groups, and 22.6% less security in independent journalism. Along with this, journalists also specified some political influences, among them, 23.6% of

participants said they had to face threats from political groups, 34.2% found ideological influence, 28.9% observed news compromising, and 13.2% of participants saw promoting political persons or groups in news and media houses. Moreover, it alarming is that 28.9% of the participants observed these kinds of pressures, as the study observed all issues precisely. Importantly, this study found some internal challenges participants faced in their working environment. The first challenge that came out is job security, as stated by 64.10% of the journalists. Following are insufficient salary, excessive workloads, and threats imposed by media houses, which have been stated by 56.40%, 46.20%, and 5.10% of the journalists in this study. As stated by 35.9% of the journalists, there is also a lack of important facilities that need to be addressed. Rather than internal challenges, journalists pointed out distinct kinds of challenges that have become more challenging in recent times. An important challenge that journalists have to face is disparities among co-workers. Fifty percent of the journalists observed gender disparity among workers, 35.70% found political and family allies and 10.70% of them found conflict and disparity based on religion among co-workers. Besides, 7.10% observed community-based disparity among co-workers in media houses. The above internal challenges and lack of facilities can slightly depict the picture of current media houses and their environment. During the Covid pandemic, lots of media houses laid off some journalists or reduced their salaries and other facilities to adapt to the situation. Still, the situation remains, and the media houses are trying to adapt to the new normal world. So, fighting with many challenges daily in media houses for journalists is not new. Journalists always hope to seek their basic needs from their houses regularly. Some other factors are associated with job satisfaction. Most journalists (80%) seek a sufficient and regular salary first, and then other factors come. Forty percent of journalists seek work motivation, 37.50% seek flexible working time, 35.50% want a friendly working zone, and 37.50% want to ensure basic leave. When talking about basic rights, it is needed to discuss the training or workshop opportunities if journalists get from their houses or not. The study found that most (52.5%) journalists think the media houses offer these opportunities. However only below 45% of the journalists attended below 5 programs, and 37.5% of journalists attended only 5 to 10 programs so far provided by media houses. However, a remarkable number of journalists (32.5%) disagreed that they found no opportunities like these. This shows the very frustrating condition of the media house's support to the journalists.

The current media system

The study found the journalists' opinions about the media system are not at a satisfactory level. Most journalists (56.40%) still think media houses have a moderate type of media system and 5.10% have a negative view of the system. Though some journalists (38.5%) think their media houses have the best media environment

compared to others, this doesn't depict a good media environment so far. In the media world, the issues to be considered about media are laws, acts, and regulations that can harm them sometimes. This finding shows in the study that most journalists (58%) are concerned about the media's laws, acts, and regulations and stay updated. Among them, 37% of the journalists have average knowledge about media's laws, acts, and regulations but there is some confusion. Compared to them, only a few journalists have a low-level understanding of media regulations. Though this study found journalists' concerns about media's laws, acts, and regulations, a strict and more concerning scenario is also found in this study. The study reveals that imposing laws, acts, and regulations on journalists can sometimes create panic and self-censorship. It is obvious that 51.3% of journalists think that frequently imposing acts and regulations on journalists can create panic and self-censorship. Also, large numbers of journalists (43.6%) think occasional attribution of these acts and regulations can create panic and self-censorship. In a sentence, 33% of the journalists pointed out the current scenario of the media system and considered that this system plays a barrier to Freedom of work. And most of the journalists (54%) think it should be modified with more flexibility.

Job satisfaction among journalists through the current media system

Within the current media environment, 35.9% of journalists did not speak about their job satisfaction and stayed neutral with confusion. Though the same percentages (28.20) show satisfaction and dissatisfaction categories respectively, the overall scenario did not show the positivity of current media houses. Again, following this issue, journalists were asked about the future of the current media system that would ensure job satisfaction among journalists; most of the journalists (87.5%) had negative views saying that the current media system is not helpful in building a better future. They think this system must be modified for a better future for journalists and media houses.

Findings and Discussions of Qualitative In-Depth Interviews

Theme category 01: political influence and affiliation

One influential changing factor in media is political impact and its effect on the free flow of information. The influence can be observed since the regime of Hussain Muhammad Ershad, the former Bangladesh army chief and the president from 1983 to the 1990s. This change has been evolving significantly since 2002 with some particular issues, including Ekushey Television's closure. We have other examples of terminating different television channels. The regime of the caretaker government during 2006 also had some effects on Bangladesh's media system, particularly in the

ownership of media houses. Facing different regulations along with restrictions has become a trend in our media system. Nowadays, it has become common to charge the owners directly along with the journalists. One of our interviewees has said that one of the media's basic responsibilities is to ask follow-up questions until it finds out the real truth and disseminates them to the masses. But currently, the media must compromise on this task, which indicates the present environment of our press's freedom. Even the scenario comprising their rudimentary responsibilities differs from media to media. One of the participants mentioned that it is not only present in Bangladesh but every country in the world is facing control and restriction upon their media houses. But the significant question is, why it is much more restrictive in our country? It can be observed that many newspapers situated at the district levels can publish some critical news, which is not possible for the renowned newspapers or television channels of Bangladesh. Thus, it creates an alienation in the responsibilities of a reporter alias journalist and pollutes the stability of free journalism. Different functioning laws, including the Digital Security Act (DSA), create obstruction and particularly mental censorship among journalists. One of the interviewees said that nowadays, mental censorship has become more mainstream than getting threats from different terror groups. Distinct acts of different punitive laws have presented many examples that show that media workers are becoming the victims of these misappropriated laws. Therefore, it is a major fact that journalists are dissatisfied and strained about the actual responsibilities of the press.

Theme Category 02: Technology and Culture of Conglomerate-Ownership and Their Interest

Plentiful media houses can now be seen getting the license, 'But this is a mushroom growth of media under corporate, big business-ownerships'. This scenario would not be a dilemma if the license would be provided through due legal as well as official procedures. But in Bangladesh, this ownership through licenses is prioritized to the people with vast amounts of profit, business conglomerates, and, importantly political clouts. This contaminates professional journalism and serves the petty interests of the different political parties as well as the conglomerates. Business interest plays a crucial role in the actual roles of a journalist. A particular news house cannot disseminate anything against a garment owner if the house is owned by the owner by himself, and this has become very customary in Bangladesh. Often it is seen in the different framings of words, terms, and headlines of news stories. Thus, it will play as a hindrance to the development of professional journalism.

Theme category 03: dividends among journalists

Some obligations also indicate the dividends among journalists and the absence of unity. This factor influences the authority (owners of the media house, political parties) to restrict and conduct

embargoes along with different censorship, laws, and punishment. The interviewees ascertained it as the fault of our journalists and their lack of unity. One participant said this dividend is also an aftermath of the political pressure increasing since the 90s. It is a negative aspect that journalists and media workers are divided among diverse groups. Still, on the other hand, the owners and their ways of directing the media houses got united. This dividend also caused journalists to suffer in many ways, including several draconian media and rights to information laws, maintaining professionalism, a specific wage board, and providing other benefits.

Theme category 04: lack of institutional structure

It is a prominent reason for increasing dissatisfaction among journalists and media employees in Bangladesh. The absence of a well-built institutional structure is noticeable in every media, which is an enormous limitation. This exclusion of organizational structure has also created an absence of liability in today's media. One of the eminent factors for the hindrance in assuring liability is the absence of absolute democracy and lack of freedom of expression. Also, an overall lack of functional democracy, a climate of compromised governance, corruption, and quality of lawmakers (elected through questionable election process) pose an unfriendly work environment.

Conclusion

In the journalism field, the journalists' lives matter. If journalists get job satisfaction, we will get the best media support in this chaotic world. There are lots of issues about the media environment that should be addressed. In this study, it is obvious that journalists are fighting for the basic needs that make them depressed in the current media environment. Apart from that most of the journalists in this study are facing enormous internal and external challenges and a scarcity of facilities during their working tenure. The main obstacle is Freedom of expression stated by journalists and media experts. Some of the journalists remark that they must stay quiet for the pressure from the media's laws acts and regulations, because of the frequent imposing of laws, acts, and regulations on journalists that can create panic and self-censorship on themselves. Journalists are so disturbed by the current Media's regulations and acts that hinder independent journalism. Media experts also think media workers are becoming victims of these misappropriated laws, which leads to dissatisfaction in their jobs and keeps them away from the actual responsibilities of the press. This turns into the biggest challenge for journalists in independent journalism. Sometimes, journalists face the most concerning deals, threats, and political influences from various sources, specifically authorities and groups. This is so obvious that conglomeration with the corporate owner of different authorities and groups evolved with business outlook hinders professional journalism's development.

The most concerning thing is that journalists have no unity. Media experts also blame them for not being united in the current media environment and also think that this divide can make journalists suffer in many ways, especially when deprived of facilities. The most important and foremost basic need for journalists is a sufficient and regular salary. Most of the journalists in this study seek this need badly from their media houses. Then come other needs and challenges, such as; job security, flexible and friendly working zones, basic leave, insufficient salary, excessive workloads, and threats. Along with these problems, disparities, to be more precise, gender disparity among co-workers, have become another concerning issue nowadays. Moreover, most journalists remarked that they are not getting proper work motivation and training programs from their media houses. Being divided, the journalists cannot speak together in need and continuously are facing the above challenges. While discussing journalists' job satisfaction in the current media system from the satisfaction and dissatisfaction categories, the overall scenario did not show the positive sides of the current media houses. Media experts found that the exclusion of organizational structure has also created an absence of liability, an absence of absolute democracy, and a lack of Freedom of expression in today's media. Moreover, a lack of functional democracy and a climate of compromised governance, corruption, and low quality of lawmakers have created an unfriendly media environment so far. Also, based on the above needs and facilities challenges, most journalists found a moderate type of media system in the recent Bangladeshi media landscape. As the scenario is considered a barrier to freedom of work, most journalists think that the current system will not help build a better future. They think this system must be modified for a better future for journalists and media houses. This study found lots of challenges for journalists, most of whom have to face regular challenges in media houses in Bangladesh. But this unfriendly situation needs to be changed for a better media environment. Throughout the study, all the objectives have been met, and the importance of this study is that it focuses on the findings. Indeed, this study digs into the crucial sides of the media, and the findings add new aspects of knowledge in media studies.

Limitations

This study was not without limitations. First, this study was conducted on a topic which is a sensitive topic. Thus, there has been a lack of neutral data from the participants. Participants were selected from different media houses and backgrounds, including their other political affiliations, which might have created an obstacle to getting neutral data and an accurate picture of the findings. Secondly, if any participant had a strong connection with the current ruling party, s/he may divert the discussion, which might have affected the data and results of this study. It might have happened that other participants (supporting other political parties)

felt minor and did not share their neutral views. Besides, in-depth interviews were planned to be conducted online which also created a barrier to observing the participants, specifically their non-verbal attitudes which could help to find latent meanings of the data. Sometimes, the net connection disrupted the fluency of the discussions on this sensitive issue. Another limitation was the number of recruiting participants for the in-depth interviews. Generally, data saturation begins (though it is not absolute) after 12 to 15th no interview; here, we could conduct 6 interviews. As mentioned, it is a sensitive topic, and during the pandemic protocols, some participants did not want to share their opinions and views online. We had to exclude them regarding their preference. Finally, the online survey would be better if more media professionals could be recruited.

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