GMMP+30

Pakistan

National Report

GMMP+30

Global Media
Monitoring
Project

2025

WACC
communication *for all*

GenderWatch

In Partnership with

UN WOMEN

FOR ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Abbreviations

BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
FIR	First Information Report
FM	Frequency Modulation
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GEM	Gender Empowerment Measure
GMMP	Global Media Monitoring Project
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
KPK	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
KTN	Kawish Television Network
MPA	Member of Provincial Assembly
NCSW	National Commission on the Status of Women
NPA	National Plan of Action
PEMRA	Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority
SC	Supreme Court
WACC	World Association for Christian Communication

GEM-I Index

Gender Equality in the News Media Index (GEM-I) 2025

1. The GEM-Index calculates the average gender gap in the news based on 6 GMMP indicators. A score of +100 means that all persons in the news (subjects, sources and reporters) are women. A score of -100 indicates that all persons in the news are men. 0 indicates gender equality. 2. The map is based on the latest GEM-I values for each country. GMMP 2020 values are applied for those that did not participate in the 2025 edition. 3. See the report for details on the calculation.

Map: GMMP • Source: Global Media Monitoring Project • Created with Datawrapper

PREFACE

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action premised that "Women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace" (United Nations, 1995). Specifically, the Declaration in its Section "J" established the following objectives related to women and media: Strategic objective J1. "Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication. Strategic Objective J2. Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media" (United Nations, 1995).

The first global monitoring was sparked by a need for empirical evidence on women's place, role and participation in the news.[1] The Beijing Platform for Action thereafter enshrined media monitoring as a strategy to achieve strategic objective J1. Non-governmental organizations and media professional associations were encouraged to establish "media watch groups that can monitor the media and consult with the media to ensure that women's needs and concerns are properly reflected" (para 242a)

The GMMP evolved into the largest and longest-running research and advocacy initiative for gender equality in and through the news media. In five-year spurts since 1995, the GMMP takes a snapshot of key gender equality dimensions in the news. Across thirty years to date, the GMMP has built the data from over 160 countries, with at least one observation for each variable and country.

The global news media landscape has changed profoundly, yet women's place within it has not. The evolution of women's encounters with the sector across the period has not been as dramatic. The

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[1] Read more in the full text of the Bangkok Declaration, outcome of the 1994 "Women Empowering Communication" conference at which the idea of a GMMP was birthed. https://whomakesthenews.org/wp-content/uploads/who-makes-the-news/Imported/documents/bangkok%20declaration.pdf

GMMP reveals that, in many ways, the status quo of gross underrepresentation and misrepresentation in content has persisted.

Global Context

Global Findings - The Highlights
The global findings are based on 29,935 news articles containing 58,321 people and 26,560 news personnel in 94 countries on the 7th global monitoring day, May 6, 2025.

1. **Thirty years ago, the report of the first GMMP called for a shift in coverage beyond the male-dominated realms of political and economic power. Not only has the hierarchy of "hard news" in legacy media persisted across time, it has also crossed over into digital outlets.**

Digitalization did not bring a radical break from the patriarchal norms of traditional journalism. Instead, it continues to reinforce and amplify a news hierarchy that privileges spheres and issues centred on power, namely, those dominated by men. The challenge is threefold. First, to dismantle the "hard news" bias, second, to integrate more intentionally spaces and issues of greater concern to women, and third, to enable visibility and voice to women present in traditionally male-dominated spaces.

2. **After a period of slow but steady improvement, progress toward gender parity in the news has flatlined since around 2010, failing to reach 50% in any media type.**

Thirty years after Beijing, women are 26% of those seen, heard, or spoken about in legacy news (29% on news websites). The needle has shifted 9 points in legacy media since 1995, and 4 points in online news during the past 10 years.

Minority groups are five points more likely to be present in digital news than in legacy media. The probability of minority women being featured in the news as the main protagonists or as interviewees is two in a hundred in traditional media (3% for men) and 4% on news websites (5% for men).

3. **Women's visibility in political and economic news has increased significantly – by 15 points each – over the past three decades.**

The severe underrepresentation noted in 1995 (7% in political news, 10% in economic news) has improved. Women's presence in sports news is abysmal, at only 15% of news subjects and sources.

4. **The proportion of women providing expert testimony has grown remarkably over the decades, showing the highest increase (+7 points) in digital news since 2015.**

In legacy media, the gender gap in authoritative roles as experts and spokespersons has closed at a slower pace than for persons providing testimony based on popular opinion and personal experience – ordinary roles that require no specialized knowledge.

5. **Patterns of gender-biased portrayal endure despite decades of change in women's roles in the physical world**

Women have remained about twice as likely as men to be portrayed as victims since 2010. Historically, women were most often portrayed as victims of accidents or poverty. This pattern was overturned in 2025, with "other crime" and "domestic violence" (by intimate partners and family members) becoming the top victim categories.

Women depicted as survivors in legacy media were most likely to have survived "accidents, natural disasters, poverty, and disease" in previous GMMP studies. In 2025, they are most frequently portrayed as domestic violence survivors in equal proportion to accident/disaster survivors.

The over-representation of women as homemakers/parents decreased from 81% in 2000 to 73% in 2025, indicating progress although a persistent journalistic bias toward defining women by domestic

roles, despite women's current unprecedented engagement in work outside the home. Underrepresentation in occupations and in positions of power has remained consistent.

The tendency to describe women by their age and physical attributes has also persisted. They have been photographed more often than men (a 7–9-point difference) over the past two decades, with qualitative analysis continuing to show patterns of sexualized portrayal.

6. Gender inequality in the news is much more acute than in the lived experience.

Gender equality in the news, measured by the GEM Index, is moderately correlated with gender indices in other development sectors such as the Gender Social Norms Index. Between 65% to 75% of media gender inequality cannot be explained by reality, indicating the presence of other confounding factors at play that co-mingle to produce the prevailing gendered news narratives.

7. Women's share as reporters in stories published in newspapers and aired on television and radio has risen and stagnated in spurts since 1995.

Globally, the proportion of women as reporters in legacy media rose 6 points from 2000 to 2005, stalling at 37% for 10 years until 2015, rising 3 points again between 2015 to 2020, and gaining just two points in the past five years. The regions approach and consistently fail to achieve parity, except for the Pacific and the Caribbean, exactly at equality, and North America just a single point below. The findings suggest most news systems are willing to absorb a certain proportion of female labor in the reporter role, but not to cede to full numerical gender equality.

In legacy news media, the gender gap in political reporting has narrowed the fastest (+13 points in 25 years) – outside the sports beat – yet it remains the topic least reported by women. For the first time in 25 years, women now constitute a majority (52%) of science and health reporters. The new tracking of sports news reveals a severely low proportion of female reporters (17%).

Women's share as reporters in national and international stories has seen significant long-term growth (+18 and +16 points, respectively).

8. The sex of the journalist influences the gender lens in stories

The gender lens has historically been found to be sharper in articles by women reporters. Across three decades, a consistent 5–6-point gender gap has existed in source selection, where female reporters feature more female sources than their male colleagues. This gap is even wider (9 points) in digital news. The gender-lens gap between female and male journalists is largest on the indicator regarding women's centrality in the news. The difference is just 1-2 points on other indicators measuring news quality from a gender perspective, but that it exists is an important finding.

9. Gender-based violence is a blind spot in the news. When GBV makes the news, however, the gender lens in reporting is sharper than in stories on all other topics.

Less than 2% of stories cover gender-based violence. This low count is at odds with the serious nature of GBV affecting one in three women and girls worldwide.

Stories on gender-based violence produced by female journalists are more likely to raise gender (in)equality issues than those by men.

While the gender lens is sharper in GBV stories compared to other major topics, there remains enormous room for improvement if news media are to participate in creating a society in which GBV is understood as deviant, criminal, and a violation of fundamental human rights.

10. The bulk of news stories remains deficient in the GMMP dimensions of quality from a gender perspective

The proportion of news stories that clearly challenge gender stereotypes rose from 3% (2005) to 6% (2010) but declined and has remained stagnant at 3-4% since 2015. This indicates an entrenchment of stereotypes in reporting and a consistent journalistic failure to produce content that disrupts stereotypical narratives.

The regional comparisons show significant variations. North American news is exceptional, clearly challenging gender stereotypes in 19% of stories, in sharp contrast to Middle Eastern news, where only 1% overturn simplistic narratives about the roles, attributes, and capabilities of people based on gender.

Gender stereotypes are most prevalent in stories about politics and the economy, both spheres where men are the majority power holders. Over time, challenging stereotypes remains largely confined to topics in which it is safer to challenge the skewed gender power relations status quo. These are celebrity/arts/media, and social/legal news. GBV stories challenge gender stereotypes more than any other news, at 17%. While commendable, this level is insufficient to transform the harmful norms that perpetuate such violence.

The likelihood of news stories to cite human rights or gender equality frameworks has fluctuated modestly, hovering between 7% and 11% over the 15 years that this indicator has been measured. A human rights lens is absent in approximately 9 out of 10 stories.

Online stories are less likely to integrate a human rights lens than those published in legacy media, but the probability of women being the central protagonists in a news story is higher in digital news (15%, compared to 10% in traditional news).

In all story topics except for GBV news, the sex of the reporter matters slightly for the integration of a gender lens. 3% of stories by women clearly challenge gender stereotypes, compared to 2% of those by men. 12% of stories by women highlight gender (in)equality issues, compared to 10% for men. 8% of articles by women adopt a human rights framing, compared to 7% of those by men. In the case of GBV stories, for instance, female reporters are more than 10 points more likely to call attention to gender inequality than those by men.

11. The GMMP message in 2025, thirty years post-Beijing, is a global news industry whose progress towards gender equality has reached a crossroads.

The almost standstill pace of change in the past 15 years points to a need for a radical shift in strategies by all actors in the news ecosystem to break the inertia. Under the current conditions and with the current tools, remarkable change towards gender equality is unlikely. The negative impacts of digitalization on the news industry and gender relations online as a whole will undoubtedly make the task of securing women's rights in and through digital news more complex.

National Context

Pakistan's journey toward gender equality has been a slow one. According to the 2025 United Nations Development Programme Human Development Report, Pakistan ranks 168 out of 193 countries on the Human Development Index, with a value of 0.544, and occupies the 145th position out of 172 countries on the Gender Inequality Index, which stands at 0.536. These figures reflect disparities in health, education, and political participation. Women's educational attainment has improved modestly, with female literacy rising from 46.5 percent in 2024 to 48.5 percent in 2025, but economic participation remains extremely limited. The proportion of women in ministerial positions dropped to zero in 2025. These indicators underscore the obstacles women face in asserting agency and influence in public life.

The inequalities extend to the media sector. The Government of Pakistan formally recognised the importance of gender equality in media with the 1998 National Plan of Action for Women (NPA), which aligned with international commitments under the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The plan identified "Women and the Media" as an important area for intervention. It envisioned gender-sensitive newsroom policies and reforms to ensure women's voices were represented in news content and decision-making processes. The National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), established in 2000, was mandated to monitor these reforms. Despite these commitments, implementation has been limited. Media houses generally continue to reflect the gaps, with women underrepresented both on-screen and in editorial and leadership positions.

The news environment in Pakistan is shaped by a combination of political volatility, security concerns, and rapid digital expansion. On days of national or regional crisis, such as the 2025 monitoring day when cross-border conflict with India dominated headlines, newsrooms focused overwhelmingly on political and military actors. During that day, traditional media in Pakistan reported extensively on troop movements, official briefings, and civilian and military casualties, leaving little space for women as news subjects. Women made up only 11 percent of all subjects in print, radio, and television news, while they constituted 26 percent of subjects in internet news, reflecting the broader coverage that digital platforms allow. Across decades of monitoring, women are primarily visible in stories about health, culture, and social issues, whereas their presence in political, economic, or security news remains minimal.

Uks Research Centre has been Pakistan's national partner for the Global Media Monitoring Project for four consecutive cycles, focusing a lens on women's visibility in news media. This long-term association reveals how longstanding gender disparities continue to affect both the content and the professional opportunities in journalism. Even though the media sector has expanded with private television channels, radio stations, and online platforms, societal norms, security concerns, and workplace barriers still limit women's participation and visibility. Female journalists are still underrepresented in hard-news beats and leadership roles, and newsroom cultures often reinforce gender biases.

The continued underrepresentation of women in media reveals the broader context of gender inequality in Pakistan. While educational opportunities for women have improved slightly, barriers in the economic and political spheres continue to limit women's visibility and influence. As a result media coverage continues to reflect a male-dominated society, particularly in traditional media. On the other hand, digital platforms offer some space for greater representation of women.

Understanding this context is important for interpreting the 2025 GMMP results. The data captures not just a single day's news, but the outcome of decades of institutional and societal factors that shape women's visibility in Pakistani media. The findings demonstrate that policy commitments alone are insufficient. Real change will require the continued implementation of gender-sensitive reforms, interventions in newsrooms, and a general shift toward gender equality in society.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Pakistan participated in the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) for the fourth time, coordinated by Uks Research Centre, which has been monitoring media through a gender lens in the country for nearly three decades. The 2025 monitoring captured the news landscape on 6 May, a day marked by severe military and political tensions along the Line of Control with India. Both countries were exchanging fire, the Pakistani government was on high alert, and media coverage was dominated by conflict, national security, and official statements. This extraordinary circumstances shaped the news content and the visibility of women across different platforms.

The monitoring was based on nine print newspapers, six television channels, the state-owned Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation radio channel, and four news-based websites. Thirteen volunteers participated in the monitoring, including Uks staff and students from various universities. The process was supervised by experienced Uks researchers, who provided orientation and mock sessions to familiarise student volunteers with the GMMP methodology. The tools used largely reflected those of the 2020 GMMP, with minor changes, like the separate categorisation of "Gender-based Violence" and "Sports" as news topics.

Across traditional media (print, television, and radio) women constituted only 11 percent of news subjects. This reflects their marginalisation in the coverage of politics, economy, crime, and sports. By contrast, women made up 26 percent of subjects in internet news, highlighting the greater inclusivity of digital platforms, which often cover social, health, and rights-based issues in addition to mainstream politics. In traditional media, women appeared most frequently in arts, culture, and celebrity reporting (60 percent female representation) and science/health (28 percent), but their presence was nearly absent in hard-news areas: politics, economy, crime, sports, and GBV coverage ranged from 0–10 percent. Internet news was a slightly more diverse space as women were visible in politics (23 percent), science/health (33 percent), social/legal issues (33 percent), and were central to all the GBV stories that were monitored (100 percent). These findings illustrate a consistent platform-based gap, with online news offering women a higher likelihood of visibility.

The role of women in news production remained extremely limited. Across all media, men dominated reporting roles. In television, 68 percent of reporters were male. Women accounted for only 32 percent. In print, female bylines comprised 5 percent, while radio showed 100 percent female reporting on this monitoring day, though it is important to state that the small sample size (N=12) limits generalisation. More than 29 percent of news was presented or reported by women, but the majority of these women served as anchors or presenters (96 percent), with only 4 percent functioning as field reporters. Women reporters were largely absent from producing stories about men as subjects. On the other hand, men reported almost all the stories that featured women subjects.

The coverage of gender-based violence was extremely limited. Most GBV sub-topics were absent from news content, with only a single story recorded in traditional media, while online outlets addressed sexual harassment and technology-facilitated violence, often also talking about broader gender inequality and rights-based perspectives. Women news subjects were disproportionately presented as spokespersons, primarily representing government officials or politicians (89 percent), yet rarely appeared as experts, commentators, eye-witnesses, or in roles providing personal experience. Women's visibility as central subjects was limited, with only 15 percent of news stories featuring women as the main focus.

There were also other indicators of gendered portrayal that reflect inequalities and which continue to persist. Women were identified by their family roles or status in 15 percent of cases, compared to only 2 percent of men. Female news subjects appeared as victims in 26.5 percent of cases, while

men were reported as victims in 73.5 percent. Photographs disproportionately showed men (63.4 percent) over women (36.6 percent), and direct quotations were overwhelmingly given by men, with only 10.5 percent of quotes attributed to women. Overall, only 1 percent of the news content challenged gender stereotypes, and only 1 percent of stories highlighted issues of gender equality or inequality between women and men.

The 2025 GMMP snapshot confirms patterns that have continued to endure in Pakistani news. Women are largely absent from hard-news coverage, their voices are marginal in reporting and decision-making roles, and men are heavily facilitated by newsroom practices. Digital and internet platforms provide small improvements in visibility, yet these spaces remain limited given the scale and reach of traditional media.

This monitoring exercise highlights the continued structural and institutional barriers that restrain women's visibility in Pakistan's media. On a day that was dominated by overwhelming national security coverage, these findings show broader systemic trends. Traditional media continues to be heavily male-dominated, women's presence is largely confined to cultural, health, or social issues, and their role as newsmakers remains limited. At the same time, the findings point to the potential of digital platforms to create professional opportunities for women in journalism and to frame issues through a gendered and rights-based lens. This will eventually offer opportunities for improvement in the visibility and voice of women in Pakistani news.

A DAY IN THE NEWS IN PAKISTAN

The news agenda in Pakistan on 6 May 2025 was dominated by the India-Pakistan military crisis. Almost every front page and broadcast bulletin focused on shelling along the Line of Control, statements from the Prime Minister, warnings by military officials, and reports on planned Indian airstrikes. The coverage followed a predictable cycle: political briefings, official condemnations, casualty figures, and speculation about escalation.

This shaped the day's news in a very narrow way. Conflict stories filled most of the monitored sample. These stories relied on government spokespersons, military officers, defence analysts, and political leaders, almost all of whom are men. This explains why women made up only 13% of news subjects across print, radio, and television, and why online media, despite offering more varied content, still reached only 26%.

Crime and violence stories also appeared, though most were linked to security updates rather than community issues. Social and Legal coverage, which often gives women more space, was pushed aside by conflict developments. Science and health stories remained in low in single digits.

Within this environment, two stories stood out for reasons unrelated to the conflict. The first was a report about a domestic violence case in Lahore, covered through the visit by provincial MPA Hina Parvez Butt to a survivor. The second highlighted Justice Ayesha Malik receiving an honorary degree from the University of London. These two stories offered a different view of women: one as a victim in need of state protection, the other as a national figure recognised internationally for her contributions to justice. Both stories were exceptions in a day otherwise defined by regional security. They illustrate the contrast between the overwhelming presence of male voices in conflict coverage and the limited windows through which women appeared in the news. On such a crisis-heavy day, the gender imbalance in news representation became even wider sharply, both in terms of who was visible and who was reporting.

THE CONTEXT

Pakistan's Media Landscape

Pakistan's media landscape is dynamic, dominated by television, and has undergone significant transformation since the deregulation of electronic media in 2002. Understanding this structure is key to interpreting the GMMP 2025 results. The system is shaped by regulation, technology, and the diversity of languages in the country. There are a mix of national broadcasters, local outlets, and growing digital platforms, each serving different parts of a large and young population.

The media landscape is regulated by PEMRA for private broadcasters, while state-owned PTV and Radio Pakistan operate separately. Private TV channels are restricted to cable and satellite, which limits their reach in rural areas where terrestrial signals dominate. This creates an access gap. Viewership data shows TV is still the main mass medium. An estimated 65% of the population has access to a TV set. People watch for about 1.92 hours daily on average. However, viewership dropped 5% between 2017-2018, with more people shifting to digital sources.

The digital part of the media landscape is expanding quickly. Internet penetration was 27.5% in early 2021, with 61.34 million users. 99.1% of social media users access platforms via mobile phones. Facebook is dominant with around 51.9 million users. YouTube reaches 36.1 million. TikTok has about 33 million users. Radio remains important, especially in rural areas and for commuters. FM stations are popular, but they cannot broadcast their own news and must relay bulletins from Radio Pakistan or the BBC.

Print media is trusted but on the decline. Newspapers have lost over 50% of ad revenue in three years. Only 14.5% of people in one survey said newspapers were their main news source. Major print groups like Jang, Dawn, and Express maintain strong digital sites to compensate. Language defines the audience in this media landscape. While Urdu dominates national media, over 70 languages are spoken. Regional TV and radio in Sindhi, Pashto, Punjabi, and Balochi serve local communities. For Afghan refugees, Pashto and Dari content from outlets like BBC Pashto or Deewa Radio is essential.

Trust varies across the media landscape. During COVID-19, 57% of people found mainstream TV to be the most trustworthy source of information. In contrast, digital platforms were seen as less reliable due to misinformation. Newspapers also garner high trust in Pakistan. The media landscape faces challenges. Press freedom is limited and Pakistan ranks 145th globally. A digital divide exists: 35% of the country lacks internet infrastructure, and women face greater barriers to access and ownership. Misinformation, especially on social media, is a problem that continues to persist.

Key outlets include Geo News and ARY News on TV, Dawn.com and BBC Urdu online, and Radio Pakistan's national network. For regional outreach there are channels like KTN News (Sindhi) or Pashto radio broadcasts.

This report is based on a structured sample of Pakistani media monitored on May 6, 2025. The monitoring followed the international GMMP methodology to allow for global comparison.

We monitored a total of 20 outlets:
- Print (9 newspapers): This included major English-language dailies (Dawn, The News, The Nation), leading Urdu newspapers (Daily Ausaf, Daily Pakistan), and the Sindhi-language Daily Ibrat.
- Television (6 channels): We monitored the major 24/7 Urdu news channels: Aaj News, Bol News, Dawn News, Geo News, Khyber News, and Samaa News.

- Radio (1 station): The state-owned Radio Pakistan, which has nationwide reach. · Internet (4 websites): BBC Urdu, Dawn.com, The News International, and Urdu Point.
- A team of 13 monitors, trained by Uks Research, analyzed all news content published during the monitoring period. They coded a total of 308 news stories:
- Print: 129 stories
- Television: 119 stories
- Radio: 12 stories
- Internet: 48 stories

This sample gives us a representative picture of what a Pakistani news consumer would have encountered across different platforms on that day. All the percentages and figures in this report come from the analysis of these 308 stories.

Media Monitored

Based on the density bands recommended by GMMP, Pakistan was placed under Band 4 for Print, Band 3 for Television, Band 1 each for monitoring Internet, and Radio.

As per the criteria, Pakistan monitored a total of 20 mediums on the monitoring day including 9 dailies (6 English, a Sindhi and 2 Urdu based dailies), 6 television news channels, a stated-owned radio broadcast, and 4 news websites. The details of which are provide below:

Medium	Band Size	No. of Media Monitored	Media Monitored
Print	4	9 Newspapers	Daily Dawn (English) Daily The News (English) Daily The Nation (English) Daily Times (English) Daily Express Tribune (English) Daily Business Recorder (English) Daily Ausaf (Urdu) Daily Pakistan (Urdu) Daily Ibrat (Sindhi)
Radio	1	1 Radio Channel	Radio Pakistan (Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation, Infotainment, nationwide coverage)
Television	3	6 News Channels	Aaj News (Private, Urdu Language, 24/7 News Channel) Bol News(Private, Urdu Language, 24/7 News Channel) Dawn News (Private, Urdu Language, 24/7 News Channel) Geo News (Private, Urdu Language, 24/7 News Channel) Khyber News (Private, Urdu Language, 24/7 News Channel) Samaa News (Private, Urdu Language, 24/7 News Channel)
Internet	1	4 News Websites	BBC Urdu Dawn News The News International Urdu Point

A total of 308 news items were analysed through the monitoring tools provided by GMMP. To be precise, 129 news items were monitored from 9 dailies, 119 news items from 6 news channels, 12 reports from a national radio channel, and 48 stories from 4 news websites respectively.

Number of news items monitored

- Print (129) — 42%
- Television (119) — 39%
- Radio (12) — 4%
- Internet (48) — 15%
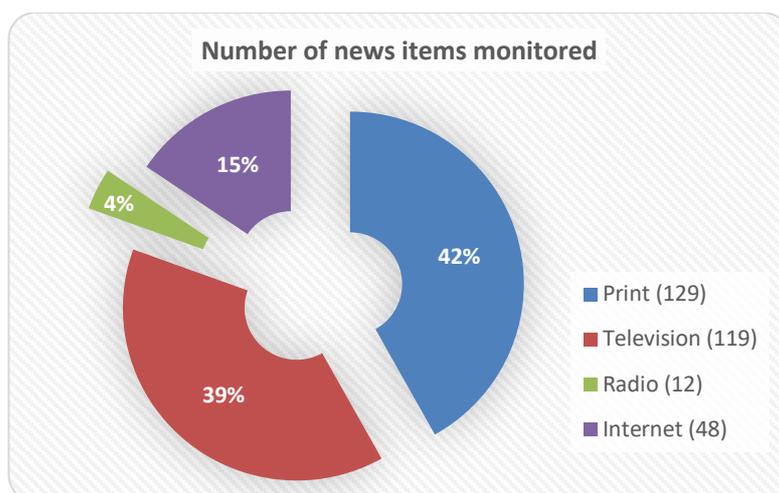
Monitoring Team

A team of thirteen monitors was established to carry out all the monitoring tasks. These included university students and Uks's team members. All the necessary facilities were in place at Uks's office including internet, news publications, radio, TV, PCs, and stationary. Uks team, supervising the entire monitoring activity, was familiar with the methodology and monitoring tools. All the monitors were trained on how to monitor media via a training session held prior to the activity.

S. No	Monitor's Name	Organisation	Monitor's Code
1	Shujaat Ali	Uks Research	SA001
2	Anoosh Ansari	Uks Research	AA002
3	Gulmina Afridi	Uks Research	GA003
4	Alishba Qamar	Uks Research	AQ004
5	Shumaila Irfan	Uks Research	SI005
6	Injie Anis	Uks Research	IA006
7	Nalain Zehra	Bahria University	NZ007
8	Alam Jalal	Bahria University	AJ008
9	Zaria Haider	Bahria University	ZH009
10	Aliza Amjad	Bahria University	AA010
11	Fiza Batool	Rawalpindi Women University	FB011
12	Eman Shakeel	Bahria University	ES012
13	Muhammad Hashim	Bahria University	MH013

TOPICS IN THE NEWS

For GMMP 2025, two new topics have been included to the list. These already existed as sub-topics in the previous GMMP activity. In order to gain access to more in-depth insights, **(a)** *Gender-based Violence* and **(b)** *Sports* have been segmented as separate major topics in the list.

The news topic that gained the most coverage across the media on the monitoring day was '*Politics and Government*'. More than 57 per cent of the total stories were related to Politics. For television, 65 per cent of its stories were related to this topic (compared to 51 per cent in GMMP 2020) while print provided 57 per cent coverage. Radio, in comparison, provided 40 per cent coverage to this topic.

Internet also had high margins of coverage of this topic at 46 per cent respectively. It is worth mentioning that **only 13 news stories** (out of total 308) were related to **women politicians** (subtopic under Topic#1) which makes hardly **4.22 per cent** of the total. More than half (7 out of 13 stories) were monitored on Internet.

Breakdown of major Topics of news items by Medium

	Print, Radio, TV	Internet	Total	Previous (GMMP 2020)
Politics and Government	156	22	**178** (57.79%)	174 (45.5%)
Economy	25	2	**27** (8.76%)	43 (11.3%)
Science and Health	12	3	**15** (4.87%)	18 (4.71%)
Social and Legal	27	11	**38** (12.34%)	49 (12.8%)
Crime and Violence	35	7	**42** (14.63%)	54 (14.1%)
Gender-based Violence	0	1	**1** (0.32%)	18 (4.71%)
Celebrity, Arts, Media	1	1	**2** (0.65%)	26 (6.81%)
Sports	4	1	**5** (1.62%)	

The second highest coverage was on '***Crime and Violence***' with more than **14 per cent** of the monitored news items. Television provided 40 per cent coverage on this topic. '***Social and Legal***' got third highest coverage on the monitoring day with above **12 per cent** followed by '***Economy***' with media coverage almost **9 per cent** of the entire monitored content.

The newly added topics i-e '***Gender-based Violence***' recorded only one news story (that too from Internet) while 5 news items were monitored for '***Sports***'.
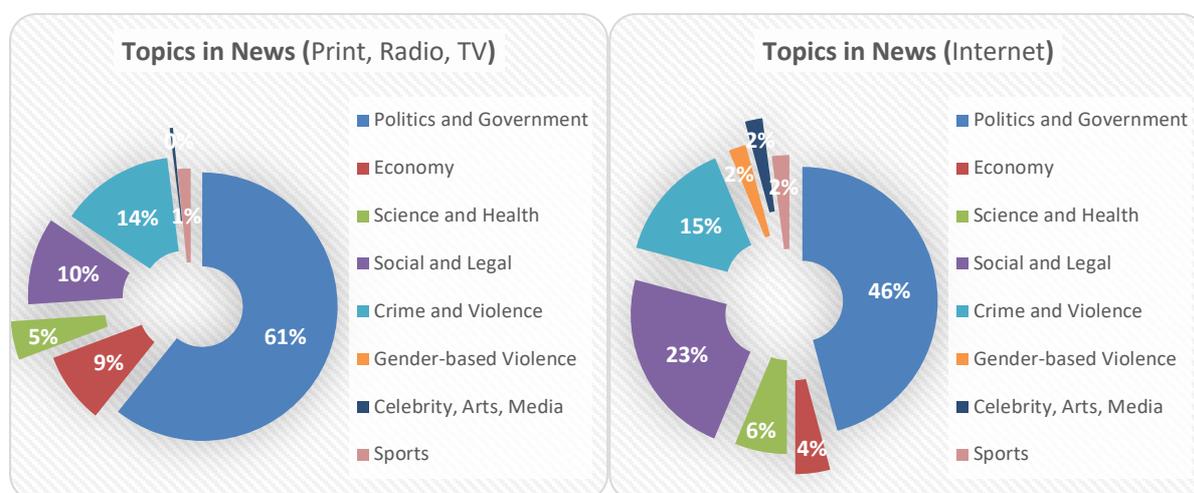
NEWS SUBJECTS AND SOURCES

Overall presence of men and women as news subjects in news in Pakistan

The overall presence of **women as news subjects** remained **13.28 per cent** on the monitoring day. The **figure has decreased by one-third** in comparison to GMMP 2020, which stood at 18.3 per cent, while it remained at 36 per cent in GMMP 2015. This year, the ratio was 11 per cent in print, radio and television, while on internet, this proportion was slightly high at 26 per cent.

Although the news coverage in last GMMP (2020) was heavily COVID driven, but the overall presence of females news subjects was better than 2025.

Print remained the **lowest** in terms of female news subjects' presence with **only 9 per cent**. On the other hand, Internet followed by Radio, represented females as news subjects with maximum coverage of **26 per cent and 25 per cent respectively**. Television remained **second lowest** with just **13 per cent** female news subjects.
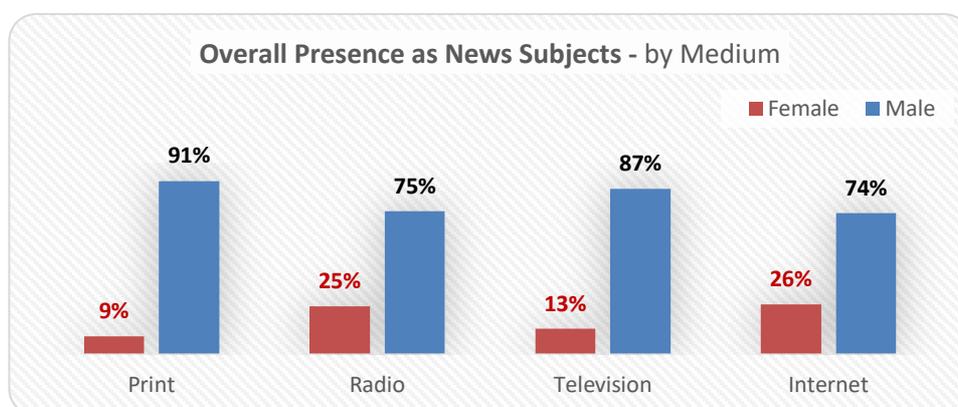
Overall presence of men and women as news subjects – by Topic

Men dominated the news stories on all the major topics except '**Gender-based Violence**' where all the news subjects were women. **No female news subjects** were monitored for **Sports**. Female news subjects' presence in '**Economy**' related topics scored the lowest and remained at only **9 per cent (**3 out of 32**) but slightly better** than the 7 per cent in GMMP 2020. 'Politics and Government' and also 'Crime and Violence' had only 10 per cent of female subjects each.

13
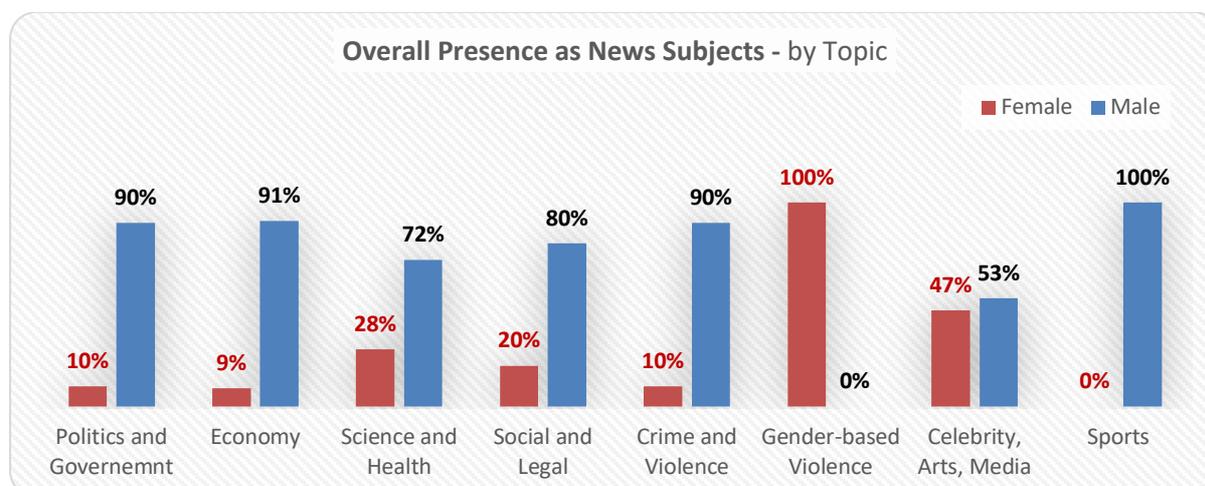
Female news subjects' representation - by Occupation

Female news subjects were just **10 per cent** of all the news stories on Politics and Government. For Pakistan, this ratio was at 27 per cent in GMMP 2015 and 14 per cent in GMMP 2020. A pandemic and war with a neighboring country affected the overall representation/portrayal of women politicians in media.

In **75 per cent** of all news stories on Celebrities and Artists, female news subjects were monitored as 'Celebrity, artist, actor, writer, singer and TV personalities' in news related to media.
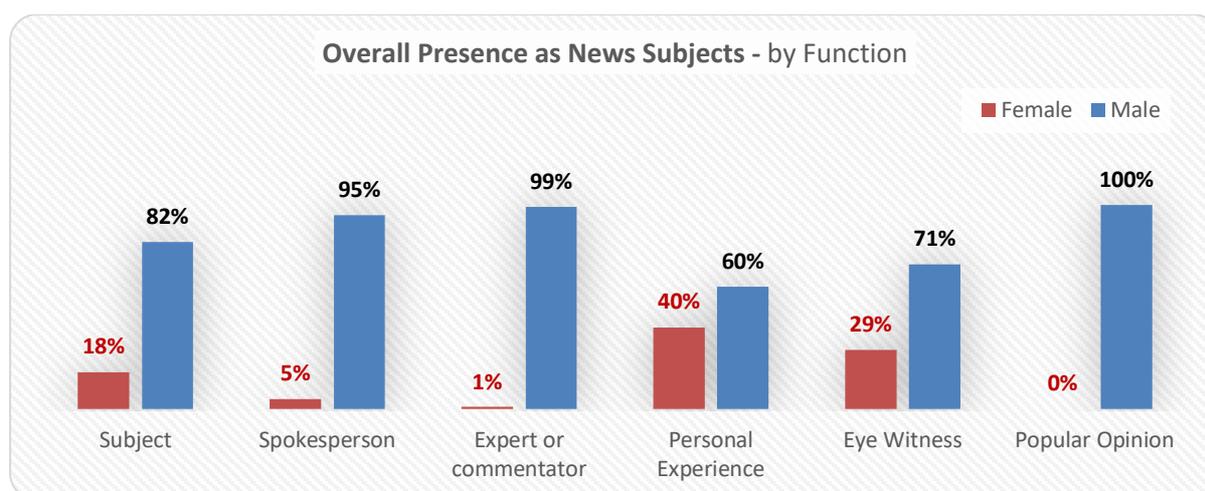
	Female News Subjects	Total No. of news items
Politician/ member of parliament, …	10%	279
Government employee, public servant, spokesperson, etc.	12%	82
Academic expert, lecturer, teacher	10%	20
Science/technology professional, engineer, etc.	100%	1
Media professional, journalist, film-maker, etc.	0%	4
Lawyer, judge, magistrate, legal advocate, etc.	4%	55
Business person, exec, manager, stock broker…	17%	6
Activist or worker in civil society org., NGO, trade union	60%	5
Celebrity, artist, actor, writer, singer, TV personality	75%	4
Homemaker, parent (male or female))	67%	3
Child, young person	44%	9
Villager or resident	29%	14

Breakdown of female news subjects – by Function

42 per cent women in news stories were spokespersons for '*Government, politician, minister etc.*' while **men** were **54 per cent**. Whereas **56 per cent** women were monitored as '***Subjects***' in news regarding '*Politician/member of parliament…*'. **No female subjects** were monitored as '***Expert/commentator***', '***Eye witnesses***' or provided any '***Personal Experience***' under the said topic.

Overall Presence as News Subjects - by Function

Legend: ■ Female ■ Male

Function	Female	Male
Subject	18%	82%
Spokesperson	5%	95%
Expert or commentator	1%	99%
Personal Experience	40%	60%
Eye Witness	29%	71%
Popular Opinion	0%	100%

Overall presence of female news subjects identified by their Family Status

15 per cent of **women** news subjects were identified by their family role/status as compared to **only 2 per cent men** in stories monitored across all the mediums.

Previously, in GMMP 2015, it was monitored that the news stories in which women news subjects were identified by their family status were being reported by a male reporter. In GMMP 2020, the ratio for identifying female news subjects by their family status was slightly high when the news item was reported by a female reporter (**62 per cent**) in comparison to male reporters (**52 per cent**). This year, like 2015, all the instances of family status were being reported by male reporters.

Breakdown of News Subjects - by Family Status

Yes ■ No ■

	85%		98%
Female		Male	
15%		2%	
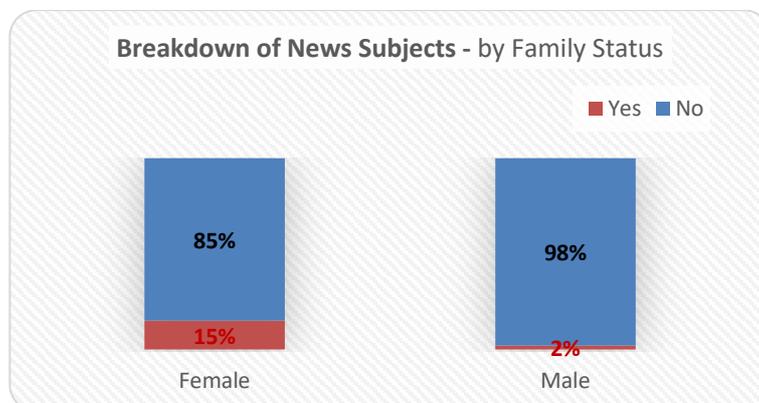
News subjects portrayed as 'Victim or Survivors'

The news items that identified news subjects as either **victim or survivor** made almost **5.34 per cent** of the total monitored content. While the news that portrayed **women news subjects as victims** were **26.5 per cent** whereas **73.5 per cent were men**. Only one male news subject was portrayed as 'survivor' while rest of the news subjects (female and male) were portrayed as 'victims'.

News subjects as Victims or Surviviors (Female and Male**)**

No ■ Victim ■ Survivor ■

95% 5% 5% 0%
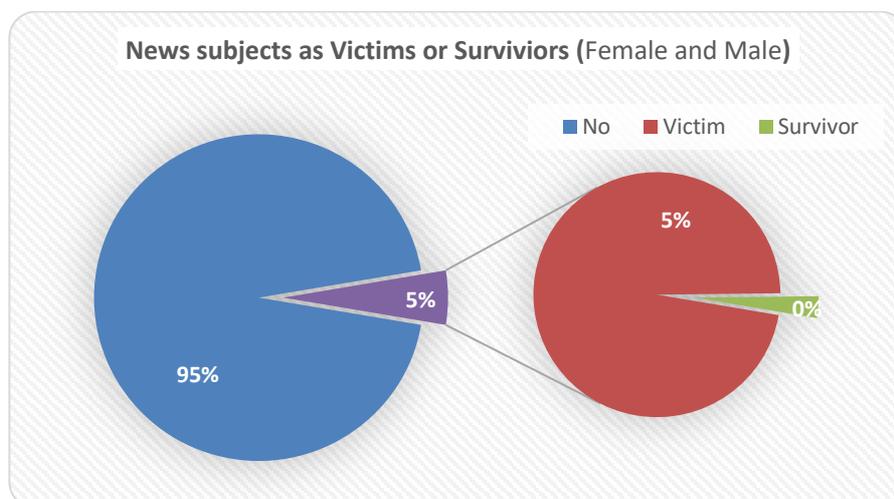
For female news subjects portrayed as 'victim', this ratio remained at 48 per cent in GMMP 2020, 61 per cent in 2015 and 43 per cent in 2010.

Of all the news stories with female news subjects portrayed as 'victims' (9 out of 34), **11 per cent** portrayed women as victims of '*non-domestic sexual violence, rape, murder etc.*'. Relatively, **11 per cent** women were portrayed as victims of '*domestic violence*', **33 per cent** as victims of *accident*, *natural disaster* or *poverty*, followed by **22 per cent** victims of '*discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, ability, etc.*'

News subjects as Victims (Female and Male)

No ■ Female ■ Male ■

95%

5%

4%

1%
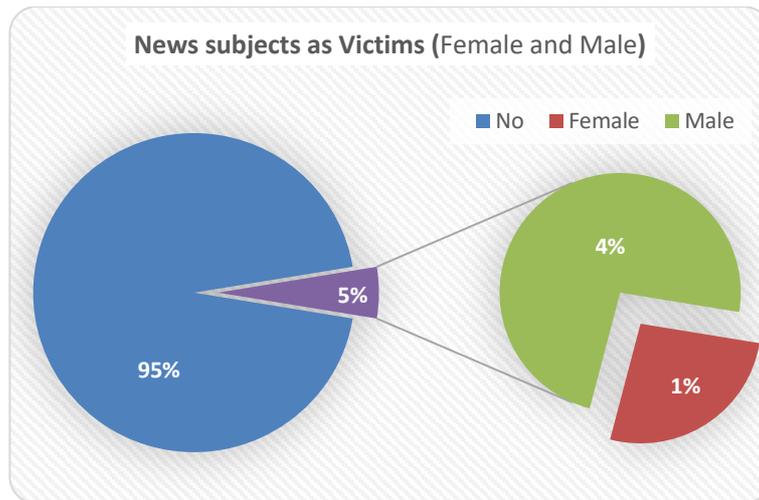
Most **men**, **24 per cent** were portrayed as '***victims***' in news stories on accident, natural disaster, poverty etc. and **20 per cent** in news on war, terrorism, state violence etc.

Images in the news

In more than **6.3 per cent** of the monitored content, **photographs** of the subjects (female and male) were **added** to the news. Across the media, **36.6 per cent** of the news subjects that were photographed were **female** (15 out of 41) as compared to **63.4 per cent male** news subjects.

For the news items with female news subjects, **16 per cent female** subjects were **photographed** similarly photographs of **7 per cent male subjects** were part of the news stories.

Images of subjects in news - by Sex

■ Photographed ■ Not Photographed

84%

93%

16%

7%
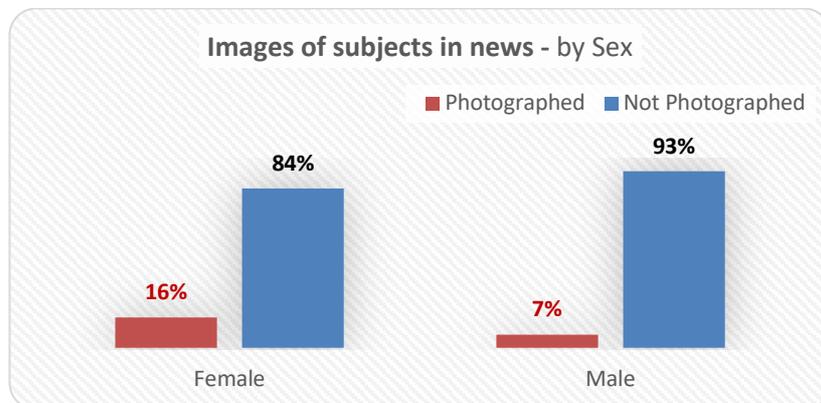
Female   Male

Breakdown of the news subjects directly quoted in the news – by Sex

Overall, news subjects (male and female) were **quoted** in **58 per cent** of the monitored news. Of these quoted news subjects, **female** were **10.5 per cent** and **male** news subjects were **89.5 per cent**. In GMMP 2020, this ratio stood at 43 per cent for female and 57 per cent for male news subjects.

News subjects quoted in the news - by Sex
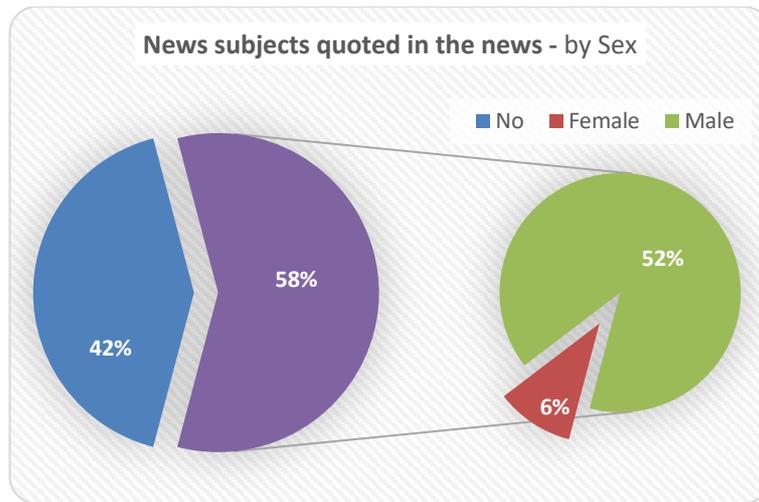
Of all the news stories **from print**, with female news subjects, **47 per cent quoted women** (44 per cent in GMMP 2020). Similarly, in stories with male subjects, **60 per cent quoted men** (45 per cent in GMMP 2020). Whereas, for all the news stories from **internet**, with female news subjects, **65 per cent quoted women** (47 per cent in GMMP 2020).

News subjects quoted in the news – by Sex

	Print		Internet	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Yes	47%	60%	65%	86%
No	53%	40%	35%	14%

Special questions in news analysis

Two special questions were added to the news' coding sheets in GMMP 2025 separate for every region/country. Provided below are the questions added by Uks Research to the coding sheets:

Special question 1: *Is the news story and event based report?* (***Yes**: 34, **No**: 273*)
Special question 2: *Is the news story balanced and objective?* (***Yes**: 224, **No**: 84*)

Special questions in news analysis
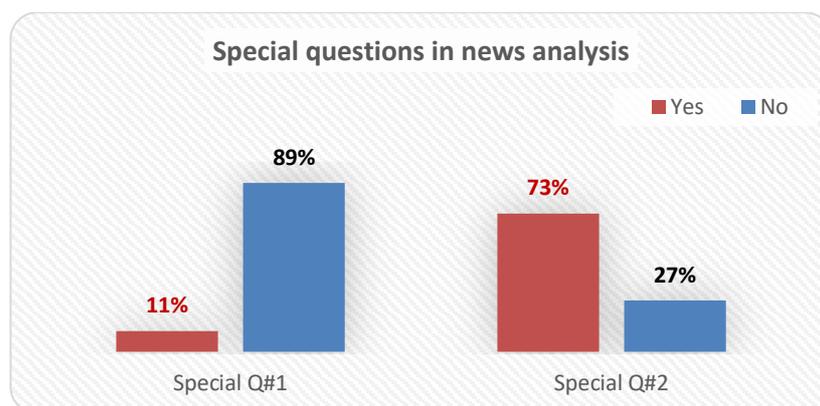
JOURNALISTS AND REPORTERS

Overall presence of female reporters, presenters and announcers in media

More than **29 per cent** of the news was presented, announced or reported by **female journalists** across the media on the monitoring day. This ratio remained at 42 per cent in GMMP 2020. **Only 4 per cent** of the female journalists were monitored as '**Reporters'** (i-e only 2 out of 52) whereas rest of 96 per cent were recorded in the role of news presenters/announcers.

In comparison, **41 per cent** of the **male** journalists were **reporters** and 59 per cent were presenters. **No female** journalist was monitored in the role a reporter in Radio, Television and Internet. **Only 2 female reporters** were monitored from Print (one each from The News and Business Recorder).
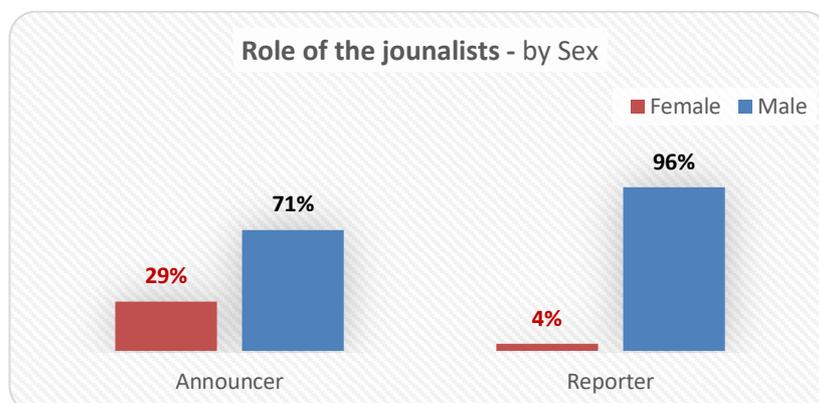
Overall presence of female reporters – by Medium

Overall presence of **female reporters** across the media added up to **3.7 per cent** of all the reporters (whose by-lines were mentioned).
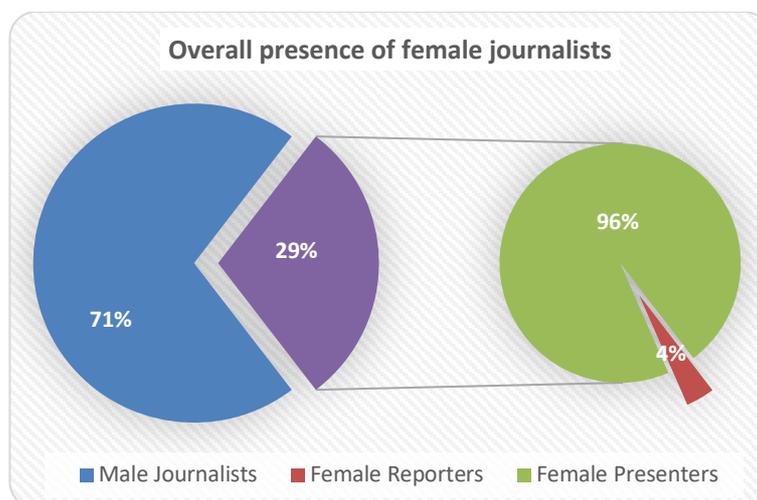
Only **5 per cent** of news stories in **print** (2 out of 39) were reported by female reporters whereas **not a single news** item was monitored to be reported by female reporters on **television, internet** and **radio**.

For Radio and Television, the trend continues, hardly any reporter actually reported the news. The whole news is presented/announced by the news announcers with flashy animations. **Out of 119 news items** from news channels, **only 7 were actually reported** and all by male reporters. Similarly, **no female reporters** were monitored for the news published online whereas 8 stories were reported

by their male counterparts.

Overall presence of female reporters - by Medium

Female Reporters ■ Male Reporters

	Print	Radio	Television	Internet
Male	95%	0%	100%	100%
Female	5%	0%	0%	0%
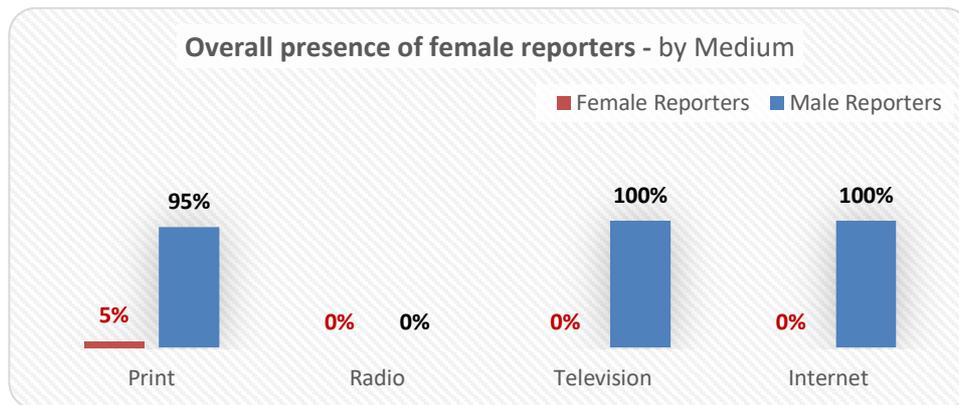
Overall presence of female reporters – by major News Topics

3 per cent of news stories on '*Politics and Government*' were reported by female reporters as compared to 97 per cent by male reporters.

9 per cent stories on '*Economy*' were found to be reported by female reporters while male reporters covered 91 per cent of this topic.

Only two stories were reported by **female reporters** compared to 52 news items which were reported by male reporters. One was related to '*Politics and Government*' while the second story was about '*Economy*'.

Topics covered by male reporters

- Politics and Government — 58%
- Economy — 21%
- Science and Health — 2%
- Social and Legal — 13%
- Crime and Violence — 6%
- Gender and Related Issues
- Celebrity, Arts, Media, Sports
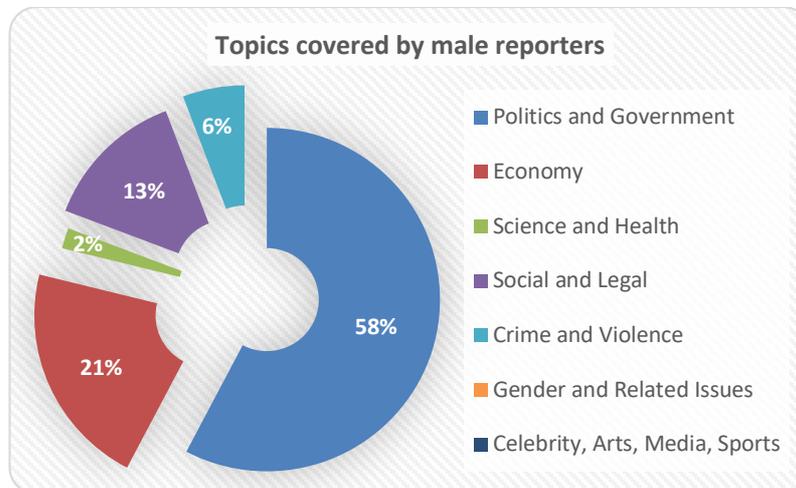
Selection of news subjects by female and male reporters

Male reporters covered all the stories with women as news subjects. Whereas, the two news stories covered by female reporters had male news subjects. More than 96 per cent of the stories with men as news subjects were covered by male reporters whereas female reporters did 3.7 per cent (2 out of 54).

JOURNALISTIC PRACTICE: ON WOMEN'S CENTRALITY, GENDER STEREOTYPES AND RIGHTS-BASED REPORTING

News stories with women as central focus

About **15 per cent** of the total news items had **women** subjects as **central focus**. Almost half of these (**43 per cent**) were on the topic '*Politics and Government*'. **24 per cent** stories from '*Social and Legal*', **13 per cent** from '*Crime and Violence*' while **11 per cent** stories from topic '*Science and Health*' were women centric.

When **compared to GMMP 2020**, these figures have improved drastically. The ratio of women centric news stories in 2020 remained at only 5 per cent in '*Politics and Government*', 14 per cent in '*Social and Legal*' and 17 per cent in '*Crime and Violence*'. There were no women centric stories in '*Science and Health'* and '*Economy*'. Whereas, '*Gender & Related*' had 87 per cent women centric content.

Topics of the news stories with women as central focus

	Yes	No	No. of Stories
Politics and Government	43%	57%	20
Economy	2%	98%	1
Science and Health	11%	100%	5
Social and Legal	24%	86%	11
Crime and Violence	13%	83%	6
Gender-based Violence	2%	98%	1
Celebrity, Arts and Media,	2%	98%	1
Sports	2%	98%	1

News stories making reference to issues of gender equality/inequality, legislation, policy

Only **1.6 per cent** of the total news items (**5 out of 308**) made reference to issues of gender equality, human rights, legislations and policy etc. **All these stories** were **reported by male reporters** as the monitoring findings indicate. Two of these news stories were on '*Social and Legal*', two were on topic '*Politics and Government*', and one on '*Crime and Violence*' respectively.

News stories highlighting issues of inequality between women and men

Only **1 per cent** of the total news items (**3 out of 308**) highlighted issues of inequality between women and men. **33 per cent** of the stories in which issues of gender equality/inequality were raised were **reported by male reporters**.

News stories challenging gender stereotypes

Although most of the news stories monitored, did not reinforce any gender stereotypes but most of them did not challenge them as well. **Only 1 per cent** of the monitored news content (**3 out of 308**) **challenged stereotypes** (one story each from Radio, Television and Internet). These three stories were based on topic '*Social and Legal*'.

Women centric news highlighting inequality, gender streotypes etc.

Legend: Yes (red), No (blue)

Category	Yes	No
Reference to equality, rights & policy	11%	89%
Highlighted gender inequality	7%	93%
Challenged stereotypes	7%	93%

FOCUS ON GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

Gender-based violence barely registered in Pakistan's monitored news on 6 May 2025. Print, radio and television published no GBV stories that day. Online coverage carried one GBV item that was published by The News (online). Because the monitoring day coincided with a major India–Pakistan security crisis, newsroom attention went to conflict coverage and GBV was pushed out.

The single GBV item that was published was about intimate partner violence against a woman. The piece identified two women as subjects and one woman as a spokesperson. The story was filed by a correspondent. The story did not talk about gender equality or human-rights, nor did it discuss any relevant legislation. It did not challenge gender stereotypes in reporting the incident.

In the piece, the primary subject was framed as a victim rather than as a survivor. The article emphasised the abuse experienced by the subjects without following up on support and legal remedy. A photograph accompanied the story, but the subject's face was not visible because the image was taken from behind.

There are three related problems for GBV reporting on that day. First, GBV had no space in mainstream news because the agenda was monopolised by issues of national security. Second, this one GBV story reported the event through a victim-centred frame without mentioning rights, policies, or how to prevent GBV. Third, there were limited quotes, no legal references, and the survivor did not have a voice thereby reducing the potential of the story to raise questions about gender violence.

This one story that 'made it' does show that GBV can break through even during a crisis. But for all practical purposes GBV was invisible in traditional media and only visible online in the most basic way.

CASE STUDIES

Case Study 1 - Blatantly Stereotyped Story

Title of article: *MPA visits domestic violence victim*
Name of publication: DAWN (Print edition / Online)
Is it one of the coded stories? Yes
Date: 6 May 2025
Country: Pakistan
Theme: Crime and Violence / Gender-Based Violence
Skills: Event-based reporting focused on official statements. The context is limited and relies on the presence of on authority figure
Genre: Straight news report

Analysis
This story focuses on a case of domestic violence involving a woman named Sehr in Lahore. The report frames the survivor's experience mainly through the actions of state officials, particularly MPA Hina Parvez Butt, who visited the victim on the Chief Minister's directive. Although the story reports the survivor's complaint and the violence she endured, it presents her primarily as a passive recipient of state assistance.

The narrative relies heavily on institutional voices. The only agency shown belongs to the MPA and law enforcement, who offer statements of support and updates on arrests. The survivor's perspective is restricted to the contents of the FIR. The report does not discuss the wider patterns of domestic violence, the systemic barriers that survivors face, or the social context that allows such violence to occur.

The language reinforces a stereotyped portrayal of women as victims almost as if they depend on political figures for rescue. The story offers no expert insight, no reference to GBV data, and no attempt to start a broader discussions about women's safety. It follows a pattern in which women appear in the news mainly when they are harmed, while authority figures who are often male (but in this case is a female) occupy the active roles. The lack of depth shows a common reporting style in domestic violence stories across Pakistan which tends to event-focused, and devoid of any kind of analysis.

Case Study 2 - Story with Subtle Stereotypes
Title of article: *University of London honours SC Justice Ayesha Malik*
Name of publication: DAWN (Print / Online)
Is it one of the coded stories? Yes
Date: 6 May 2025
Country: Pakistan
Theme: Politics and Government / Social and Legal / Women in Leadership
Skills: Profile reporting; institutional framing
Genre: Straight news / Achievement profile

Analysis
This story highlights Justice Ayesha Malik's receiving an honorary doctorate from the University of London. The article is positive and respectful, and it recognises her achievements, including becoming the first female judge of Pakistan's Supreme Court. The tone is neutral and focuses on her career, her contributions to the judiciary, and international recognition.

However, the story still reflects subtle gender patterns that are commonly found in Pakistani news. Justice Malik's achievements are framed largely through institutional announcements which is the Supreme Court's press release, the ceremony at the University of London, and the involvement of Princess Anne. There is no quote from Justice Malik herself so her voice is missing. While male judges are often quoted directly in stories about their judicial milestones.

The story also presents her achievements as symbolic of "gender inclusion." Now while this is true, it is turning Justice Malik into a representative of women rather than someone with an independent professional identity. This is a subtle pattern in many profiles of women leaders in Pakistan where their accomplishments are tied to gender milestones rather than professional expertise.

The coverage is respectful but incomplete. It celebrates her achievement without using the opportunity to discuss women's representation in the judiciary and the barriers to leadership that they face. In this way, the report reflects a more subtle form of stereotyping.

Case Study 3 - A story that is a missed opportunity or gender-blind

Title of news story: Girls Primary School Qambarkhail: 300+ students demand teachers and basic facilities *(Translated Pashto news segment)*
Name of television channel: Khyber News TV
Is this story one of the items coded in the quantitative study? Yes
Date: May 6, 2025
Country: Pakistan
Theme: Education / Social Issues / Children and Youth
Skills: News reporting; basic field reporting; no gender analysis
Genre: Television news report

Analysis
This news story highlights the lack of facilities at a girls' primary school in Bara, Qambarkhail in Pakistan's KPK province, where more than 300 young girls attend school with only one teacher, no electricity, no fans, and no classrooms. The reporter includes on-camera comments from a young girl and from a male elder (*mashar*), both of whom call for more teachers and urgent upgrades to the school building. The report ends with the correspondent appealing to elected representatives and the education department to take action.

While the story centres on girls and their access to education, it remains largely gender-blind. The report presents the school's condition as an administrative failure, but it does not explore the gender disadvantages that Pakistani girls routinely face, such as underfunding of girls' schools, lack of female teachers, cultural mobility constraints, or the consequences of girls being denied education. The inclusion of girls' visuals and their brief quotes makes it seem like a gendered story, yet the story does not analyse why girls' schools are neglected or how this impacts girls' long-term educational and social outcomes.

The footage shows girls sitting in overcrowded rooms, girls protesting with placards, and a student speaking about the absence of electricity, classrooms, and teachers. However, these visuals are simply used descriptively. The reporter does not consult any education official, women's rights advocate, or gender expert. A comment from a female student and an older man from the community reinforces the sense that community frustration is the only lens through which this issue is examined.

The greatest missed opportunity lies in the story's failure to connect the school's neglect to broader gender disparities in the public education system. This includes the chronic shortage of female

teachers, infrastructure neglect and the social impact on girls' futures. None of this is discussed.

The reporter frames the demand for facilities as a local administrative complaint rather than a rights-based issue. There is no mention of girls' constitutional right to education, or Pakistan's obligation to ensure gender parity in schooling. The report doesn't highlight how lack of facilities and teachers increases girls' vulnerability to early dropout and child labour.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings from GMMP 2025 show a sharp fall in women's visibility and participation in Pakistan's news. This year's results cannot be separated from the India–Pakistan military crisis on 6 May 2025, which dominated the news cycle. The conflict shaped almost every number in this report and pushed women out of the news at levels not seen in previous cycles.

News coverage centred on shelling across the Line of Control, political statements, military briefings, diplomatic reactions, and expected Indian airstrikes. These beats rely on institutions where men hold almost all positions of authority. When newsrooms narrowed their agenda to political and military updates, women disappeared from the frame.

Women accounted for 13% of news subjects in 2025, down from 18% in 2020. This drop was driven by the dominance of conflict-heavy content, where the majority of quoted or visible figures are men. The decline in women reporters was even more significant. Women made up 4% of reporters, compared to 16% in 2020. There were no women reporters in television, radio, or online news on monitoring day, and only two stories in print were filed by women. As a result, men reported every story that featured women as subjects.

Some topic areas saw improvement. Women appeared more often in Social and Legal news, rising to **20%**, up from 14% in 2020. But this growth could not offset steep declines in other categories. Women's presence in Politics and Government dropped from 21% to 10%. Crime and Violence fell from 32% to 10%. These shifts reflect a news agenda almost entirely shaped by national security concerns.

Visual presence declined in the same way. Only 16% of photographed subjects were women, down from 52% in 2020. With most stories focused on political leaders, spokespersons, border activity, and military events, images skewed toward men.

Gender-based violence coverage also reflected the crisis environment. Print, radio, and television carried no GBV stories. Only online outlets published three GBV stories, all focused on women. This drop is linked to crisis reporting rather than a lack of GBV incidents.

The results show that Pakistan's long-term gender gaps in media widen sharply under pressure. When the news agenda becomes narrow and state-centred, women's visibility drops across all levels: subjects, reporters, and images. The 2025 numbers must be read through this context. They reflect a crisis-driven day, not a typical news cycle. At the same time, they expose persistent newsroom structures that limit women's participation, especially in political and security reporting.

	GMMP 2025	GMMP 2020	GMMP 2015	GMMP 2010
Presence of Women in Media				
News Subjects	13%	18%	36%	26%
Presenters	96%	82%	86%	92%
Reporter	4%	18%	16%	11%
Female News Subjects by medium (TV, Radio and Print)				
Television	13%	21%	24%	50%
Radio	25%	7%	11%	10%
Newspapers	9%	22%	53%	27%
Female News Subjects - by Major Topics				
Politics and Government	10%	21%	35%	4%
Economy	9%	7%	13%	0%

Science and Health	28%	32%	0%	0%
Social and Legal	20%	14%	52%	25%
Crime and Violence	10%	32%	39%	40%
Gender-based Violence	100%			
Celebrity, Arts, Media	47%	38%	22%	50%
Sports	0%			
Female News Subjects as 'Victims'				
As Victim	5%	48%	61%	43%
Images of Female news Subjects appearing in News				
Photographs	16%	52%	19%	25%
Female Reporters				
Print	5%	0%	8%	11%
Television	0%	10%	21%	10%

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION PLAN 2026-2030

The GMMP 2025 cycle in Pakistan revealed two things. The first was the endemic invisibility of women in mainstream news, and the second was the challenges faced because of the extraordinary national context of May 2025. The overwhelming dominance of defence and war-related content which was triggered by heightened India-Pakistan tensions which ended up reshaping the entire news agenda and drove women even further out of the news. While this context must be acknowledged, it also exacerbated long-standing issues in Pakistan's media environment and monitoring practice.

Looking ahead to the 2026–2030 cycle, the following recommendations outline what needs to change in media institutions and in the monitoring methodology to ensure that Pakistan's results are both accurate and meaningful especially when the news agenda becomes distorted because of a crisis.

1. **Changes to Sampling to Reflect Pakistan's Media Reality**

   One of the biggest lessons from GMMP 2025 is that Pakistan's newsrooms rarely put women-related stories on front pages or in the news sections assigned for monitoring. This is particularly true for Urdu newspapers, where stories about women are usually found in city, local, or sometimes back-page sections. When the sample restricts monitors to certain pages only, it almost guarantees that stories about women will be missed.

   Recommendations

   - If the assigned pages show no women-related stories, monitors should be permitted to scan the entire newspaper, specifically city pages, national pages, and other pages where women's issues usually appear.

   - Change newspaper monitoring rules and align them with the monitoring practice for television, where entire news bulletins are monitored. We cannot think of any justification for allowing a full monitoring of the news bulletin for TV but restricting newspapers to certain pages.

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2. 5-year Analysis

GMMP is a one-day snapshot, and this is its global methodology. However, the extreme distortion of news on May 6, 2025 that Pakistani media faced resulted in a dataset where entire categories (such as GBV, social issues, education, and health) were missing. This made case-study selection extremely difficult and did not reflect the reality of gender imbalance in Pakistan's media.

Recommendations

- Within the national report, include a five-year analysis summarising what happened in the broader media landscape between 2020 and 2025. Pakistan's monitors recommended explicitly that each national report provide an "in-a-nutshell" reflection so that a single day's irregularities do not wipe away long-term patterns.

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3. Integrate Social Media and Entertainment Media into Gender Analysis

Pakistan's monitors stressed the need to expand beyond news. Over the past five years, social media platforms and entertainment programming, especially TV dramas, film content, and streaming platforms have sometimes had a greater impact on society than news. In many cases, they play a more powerful role in shaping gender norms than traditional news.

Recommendations

- For 2026–2030, develop a parallel qualitative review (outside the quantitative GMMP dataset) examining gender representation in:
    - Pakistani TV dramas and web series
    - Digital entertainment content
    - Prominent influencers with large following

- This review will provide a fuller picture of how gender stereotypes are portrayed in Pakistan's wider media landscape.

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4. Build Capacity of Media Houses for Gender-Sensitive Reporting

There was a steep drop in women reporters, from 16% in 2020 to just 4% in 2025. This reflects the near absence of women reporters in television, radio, and online news on the monitored day and confirms the issues in newsroom hiring and safety barriers.

Recommendations

- Conduct gender-sensitivity and safety training for reporters and editors in partnership with media houses.

- Encourage media organisations to adopt gender-balanced hiring policies.

- Introduce guidelines encouraging editors to seek women experts, particularly in male-dominated beats.

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5. Strengthen Reporting on Gender-Based Violence

With only one GBV story appearing in the entire national sample on May 6, 2025, Pakistan's data underscores a chronic underreporting of the problem. Even the single GBV story was written in an event based manner without any mention of human rights, no reference of legislation, and generally portrayed the woman as a victim rather than a survivor.

Recommendations

- Develop newsroom training on GBV reporting, including using trauma-sensitive language.

- Encourage media houses to create GBV desks so there is sustained attention to cases that barely get published.

- Build a contact list of women's rights experts that journalists can access when covering GBV stories.

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6. Continue Public Awareness Work

GMMP data doesn't just show the absence of women, but also the continued propagation of stereotypes especially in how women are portrayed as victims and in the narrow range of occupations.

Recommendations

- Use GMMP findings in public awareness campaigns, policy briefs, and journalist trainings.

- Partner with digital platforms to highlight success stories and positive portrayals of women in leadership roles.

- Advocate for inclusion of gender-sensitive content in journalism curricula nationwide.

Conclusion of the Action Plan

The 2025 results was distorted by war coverage but also confirmed long-standing patterns. There is an urgent need to rethink how Pakistani media includes, excludes and misrepresents women. The recommendations outlined here offer a roadmap for strengthening both the national monitoring process and the media landscape. With commitment from Uks, media partners, journalists, and civil society, the next five years can lay the foundation for a media landscape where women's voices are strengthened.

Annex 1. Methodology

Over a full 24-hour cycle, thousands of volunteers from the Pacific to the Caribbean monitored their news media, adding their countries' voices to this important pulse-check on gender representation in the news media. The seventh edition of the GMMP was marked by many firsts, highlighting the enhancements introduced to this study over the years. Marking a first for the GMMP, 2025 relied entirely on electronic data capture, with no handwritten forms used; coding sheets were submitted to the technical team either directly through the platform or using the spreadsheet version of the familiar coding template. This was also the first time that the majority of the online data capture was done by in-country teams, who were responsible for over 12,000 entries. Another first was the prominence of internet news items, which surpassed radio entries at the global level and in six of the eight regions, reflecting the ongoing shift toward digital news sources.

Despite these evolutions, the fundamental GMMP methodology has remained consistent over the decades, preserving the comparability of findings across survey rounds.

How the monitoring took place

The GMMP monitoring day brought together a vast global network of volunteers, all committed to answering the question, *how is gender portrayed on an ordinary news day?* The GMMP country networks, ranging from university research teams to media advocacy groups, brought with them deep expertise in local media ecosystems, ensuring that the data captured was contextually grounded, accurately capturing the nuances of news coverage across the world. In some regions, collaboration crossed borders; teams in Latin America and Asia supported neighbouring countries with data entry, ensuring that knowledge and effort were shared wherever needed.

In the lead-up to the monitoring day, the WACC team and regional coordinators ran a series of training sessions on the GMMP methodology. Country teams received refresher training on the sampling methodology and monitoring procedures, along with an introduction to the updated topic breakdowns. Teams had a choice of two monitoring options: full monitoring, which provided a detailed view of gender representation across news media, or short monitoring, which captured only the key GMMP indicators.

The training sessions also covered the use of the GMMP's custom data capture platform, which has been used since 2015. Available in English, French, and Spanish, the platform serves as the central system for consolidating responses from country teams after the monitoring day. On the monitoring day itself, teams carry out the initial data capture offline, as discussion and reflection are a key part of the monitoring process. These collaborative sessions allow teams to review findings, compare interpretations and ensure consistency. To maintain accuracy, radio and television bulletins were recorded, and copies of digital and print media were collected for reference.

The GMMP questions capture quantitative data on four key dimensions of each news item:
i) About the story: the topic, story placement and scope;
ii) About the people in the story - subjects and sources;
iii) About the news personnel - announcers, presenters and reporters - in the story; and,
iv) The quality of the story from a gender perspectives -gender stereotypes, women's centrality, rights- and gender equality angles.

Country teams can also include up to three additional questions about the people in the story, to explore concerns of specific national interest. Additionally, teams provide qualitative context to aid interpretation, describing the news agenda on the monitoring day, their reasons for selecting particular media outlets, and key features of their national media system. Teams also conduct a structured qualitative analysis following the GMMP's standard framework, complementing the

quantitative data with insights that help explain patterns and trends in gender representation in the media. While teams were not limited in the number of outlets they could monitor, guidance was provided on the recommended minimum through the GMMP media bands chart. The media bands system, first introduced in 2005, was designed to promote a more balanced distribution of data and to provide each country with guidance on the minimum number of media outlets to monitor. The bands were determined by the overall number of each type of media in each country. Over the years, desktop research has formed the basis for compiling these numbers, which were then validated with country teams. For this edition, many of the media research databases previously relied upon were outdated, prompting us to turn inward and draw on historical GMMP databases as a reference for nationally relevant outlets. This list was reviewed and confirmed by country and regional coordinators.

In several countries, the number of media outlets relevant to this study has declined since 2020, reflecting shifts in the media landscape. Subsequently, the number of media bands was reduced; for instance, broadcast media bands were scaled down from five to three. For internet news, countries were ranked according to internet usage rates published by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and grouped into corresponding media bands.

Conclusion

From classrooms and offices to shared virtual spaces, the GMMP network turned a single ordinary news day into a globally representative snapshot of gender in the media. This achievement would not have been possible without the dedication of thousands of volunteers, whose careful and diligent monitoring of media outlets worldwide sustains this important tradition of media monitoring.

References

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Annex 2. List of Monitors

The media monitors for GMMP 2025 team include:

1. Tasneem Ahmar (Director, Uks Research Centre)
2. Shujaat Ali (Program Officer, Uks Research Centre)
3. Gulmina Afridi (Research Associate, Uks Research Centre)
4. Injie Anis (Projects Coordinator, Uks Research Centre)
5. Alishba Qamar (Media Monitor, Uks Research Centre)
6. Anoosh Ansari (Media Monitor, Uks Research Centre)
7. Shumaila Irfan (Media Monitor, Uks Research Centre)

List of university students who volunteered from Islamabad:

1. Nalain Zahra (Bahria University)
2. Alam Jalal (Bahria University)
3. Zaria Haider (Bahria University)
4. Aliza Amjad (Bahria University)
5. Fiza Batool (Rawalpindi Women University)
6. Eman Shakeel (Bahria University)
7. Muhammad Hashim (Bahria University)

WACC
80 Hayden Street
Toronto
ON M4Y 3G2
Canada

Tel: +1 416 691 1999
gmmp@waccglobal.org
www.whomakesthenews.org

FB @Global.Media.Monitoring.Project
X @whomakesthenews
Instagram @gmmpglobal

Uks Research Centre
3D, 3rd Floor
Gulberg Palace
E-11/3,
Islamabad Pakistan

Tel: 92-512-712-416

FB @Uksresearch.com.pk
X   @Uksresearch.com.pk
Instagram @Uksresearch.com.pk