

Gender Equality and Media Representation in Sports Journalism in Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the challenges and opportunities related to gender accessibility, the representation of women's sports, and the role of digital tools in career advancement among sports journalists in Pakistan. Research aims to assess whether sports journalists perceive equal accessibility to the profession for both genders across different regions of Pakistan. Evaluate journalists beliefs regarding the adequacy of media representation of women's sports and analyze whether these perceptions vary by gender and media domain. Examine the relationship between access to digital tools and career advancement opportunities among sports journalists in Pakistan by combining three theoretical frameworks (social role, framing and diffusion of innovation). A cross-sectional survey by snowball sampling was conducted among sports journalists working in various regions and media domains in Pakistan. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics to summarize participant characteristics, Chi-square tests to identify associations among categorical variables (gender, region, media domain), and logistic regression to measure the influence of access to digital tools on perceptions of career advancement. The results indicate pronounced regional disparities in gender accessibility, with women in smaller provinces and rural regions facing heightened entry barriers to sports journalism. Underrepresentation of women's sports remains a prevalent concern, particularly among female and print media journalists. Furthermore, greater access to digital tools correlates with enhanced perceptions of career advancement opportunities. These findings underscore how persistent gender norms (social role theory), media framing practices (framing theory), and the adoption of new technologies (diffusion of innovation) collectively shape the professional landscape for sports journalists in Pakistan. The study provides valuable guidance for media policymakers, media organizations, and advocates aiming to advance gender equity and promote digital inclusion in the field.

Keywords: Sports Journalism, Gender Accessibility, Women Representation, Technological Access

INTRODUCTION

Gender equality within sports journalism stands as both a persistent global challenge and a lens through which the wider struggles of women in public life can be understood. Nowhere is this tension more pronounced than in countries like Pakistan, where the media industry is both a reflection and a reinforcer of patriarchal norms. Despite international advances in women's athletic participation and growing advocacy for gender equity in sports media, the field of sports journalism remains stubbornly male-dominated. In Pakistan, women who aspire to enter or excel within this domain confront an intricate web of cultural, institutional, and professional barriers, resulting in stark disparities in representation, career progression, and everyday occupational experiences (Baloch et al., 2024; Köhn, 2022; Swanson, 2009).

Historically, sports journalism in Pakistan, mirroring trends in many parts of the world has been conceptualized as a masculine pursuit. The very origins of the profession were structured around the assumption that sporting knowledge, commentary, and authority were male preserves (Lacković et al., 2022; Swanson, 2009) . Early female pioneers in sports reporting often faced exclusion from key professional spaces such as locker rooms, press boxes, and editorial meetings, as well as outright skepticism about their competence and legitimacy (Köhn, 2022; Swanson, 2009) . In Pakistan, the gendered nature of media work is further compounded by prevailing social norms that restrict women's public mobility, visibility, and professional ambition (Baloch et al., 2024; Naqvi et al., 2023) . This has resulted in a media landscape where not only are women's sports marginalized in coverage, but female journalists themselves are rendered nearly invisible.

The relationship between sports journalism and gender in Pakistan must therefore be understood within the broader context of a patriarchal society that both shapes and is shaped by its media industries. Here, the limited representation of women is not accidental, but the outcome of systemic and institutionalized gender biases that permeate recruitment, assignment allocation, newsroom cultures, and professional development opportunities (Baloch et al., 2024; Hafeez & Zahid, 2020) . Female journalists are often assigned to “soft” beats, rarely considered for leadership or decision-making roles, and face persistent pay gaps and glass ceilings. The sports beat, in particular, is characterized by an “old boys’ club” culture where access and advancement are tightly regulated by informal male networks and cultural expectations (Ahmed et al., 2024; Köhn, 2022).

Media representation is both a mirror and a moulder of public perception. In the realm of sports, this dynamic plays out in the marked underrepresentation of female athletes and the ways in which their stories are told. Numerous studies have found that women's sports receive a fraction of the coverage devoted to men's, both in volume and prominence (Pope et al., 2024; Sun, 2023; Ullah et al., 2016). Even when women athletes do make it to the sports pages or broadcasts, the framing is often colored by gendered stereotypes, focusing on appearance, family life, or perceived femininity, rather than athletic prowess or competitive achievement (Arooj et al., 2022; Martindale & Uk, 2020; Yaseen & M Asghar, 2023) . In Pakistan, where traditional views about gender roles remain deeply entrenched, these media practices do more than simply reflect society they reinforce the notion that sports, and by extension sporting journalism, are inherently masculine domains.

Such representational practices have real-world consequences. The “symbolic annihilation” of women in sports media where their presence is erased, trivialized, or confined to the margins serves to naturalize gender hierarchies and limit the imagination of what women can achieve (Martindale & Uk, 2020; Shaller J, 2006) . For female athletes, this means diminished access to sponsorships, less public recognition, and fewer opportunities for professional advancement. For women journalists, it means daily encounters with skepticism, professional isolation, and, not infrequently, overt harassment both within the newsroom and in digital spaces where their reporting is subject to hostile audience commentary (Ayhan & Demir, 2025; Baloch et al., 2024; Naveed et al., 2022; Osborne et al., 2021).

The institutional exclusion of women from sports journalism is further compounded by the absence of gender-sensitive policies in Pakistani newsrooms. Research has shown that even as women break into the field, their career trajectories are often truncated by discriminatory practices, including unequal pay, lack of mentorship, and a paucity of opportunities for advancement (Ahmed et al., 2024; Hafeez & Zahid, 2020). Harassment both sexual and psychological is a pervasive occupational hazard, with many women reporting feeling unsafe or unsupported when raising concerns about workplace behavior or discriminatory assignments (Baloch et al., 2024; Köhn, 2022) . The result is not simply the numerical

underrepresentation of women in sports journalism, but a systematic silencing of female voices and perspectives within sports media coverage and commentary.

Despite these formidable challenges, the story of women in Pakistani sports journalism is not only one of marginalization and exclusion. There are also narratives of resistance, creativity, and change. Female journalists, though few, play a vital role in challenging prevailing gender norms, both through their professional presence and the stories they choose to tell (Crawford et al., 2019; Khan et al., 2024). Digital and social media platforms have opened up new spaces for women journalists and athletes to connect with audiences directly, bypassing some of the traditional gatekeeping structures of mainstream media (Osborne et al., 2021; Toffoletti & H Thorpe, 2018). These alternative platforms enable counter-narratives that foreground women's achievements, critique sexist representations, and provide solidarity networks for women professionals across the country and beyond.

International and comparative research underscores that the patterns observed in Pakistan are part of a broader, global struggle. Around the world, women continue to be underrepresented in both sports coverage and the newsrooms that produce it, though the degree and nature of this marginalization vary according to context (Antunovic, 2023; Hardin, 2013). In some settings, progress is being made: there is growing recognition that increasing the number of women decision-makers in newsrooms can help improve both the quantity and quality of coverage devoted to women's sports (Hardin, 2013; Pope et al., 2024). At the same time, the phenomenon of "pseudo-progress" where women's increased visibility does not translate into real changes in power or professional opportunities remains a challenge, with many women still confined to token roles or "feminized" assignments (Faedo et al., 2024).

Media scholars have long debated whether the representation of women in sports media is best explained by institutional exclusion, audience demand, or broader societal attitudes. Feminist and critical media theorists argue that these forces are mutually reinforcing: discriminatory newsroom cultures shape what gets covered and how, while the resulting media narratives help to normalize gender inequalities in wider society (Lacković et al., 2022; Shaller J, 2006). The Pakistani context provides a particularly stark example of these dynamics.

Research Objectives

- To assess sports journalists' perceptions of equal accessibility to the profession for both genders across different regions.
- To examine sports journalists' views on the adequacy of women's sports representation in the media and to determine if these perceptions differ by gender or media domain.
- To investigate the association between access to digital tools and perceived career advancement opportunities among sports journalists.

Research Questions

- Do sports journalists perceive equal accessibility to the profession for both genders across regions?
- Do sports journalists believe women's sports are adequately represented in the media and does this perception vary by gender or media domain?
- Is access to digital tools associated with better career advancement opportunities for sports journalists?

Hypothesis

H1: Sports journalists do not perceive equal accessibility to the profession for both genders across different regions.

H2: Sports journalists believe women's sports are not adequately represented in the media.

H2: Perceptions regarding the adequacy of women's sports representation in the media vary significantly by journalists' gender.

H2: Perceptions regarding the adequacy of women's sports representation in the media vary significantly by media domain.

H3: Access to digital tools is positively associated with better career advancement opportunities for sports journalists.

Statement of the Problem

Despite gradual global progress towards gender equality, sports journalism in Pakistan continues to reflect significant gender-based disparities. Female journalists in this field often face limited access, reduced professional recognition, and fewer opportunities compared to their male counterparts. Women's sports remain grossly underrepresented in Pakistani media, mirroring broader societal attitudes that marginalize female athletes and journalists alike. While prior research has highlighted the existence of such inequalities, there is a lack of empirical evidence detailing the extent of these issues within the specific cultural and regional context of Pakistan. Furthermore, the impact of regional differences and media types on gender equality in sports journalism remains underexplored, creating a gap in both academic literature and practical policy interventions.

Significance of the Study

This study addresses a critical gap in understanding gender equality and media representation within Pakistani sports journalism. By empirically examining the perceptions and experiences of sports journalists across various regions and media outlets, the research offers valuable insights into the unique challenges faced by women in this field. The findings not only reinforce the urgency for equitable representation and access but also inform policy makers, media organizations, and advocacy groups about the need for targeted interventions. Ultimately, this study aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on gender inclusivity, encourage institutional reforms, and foster a media environment that supports equal opportunities and fair representation for all sports journalists, regardless of gender.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Gender and Sports Media: International Patterns and Theoretical Approaches

The issue of gender representation in sports media has drawn sustained academic attention worldwide. Across contexts, research has shown that sports journalism remains predominantly male-dominated, both in terms of newsroom staffing and the coverage afforded to men's sports (Lacković et al., 2022; Swanson, 2009). Studies highlight that female journalists and athletes are systematically marginalized, with news coverage often reinforcing traditional gender roles and stereotypes (Köhn, 2022; Shaller J, 2006). Shaller

J, (2006) identifies a persistent trend in the symbolic annihilation of female athletes, where their achievements are downplayed, trivialized, or ignored altogether.

Media framing theory has been extensively used to understand how journalists and editors construct narratives around women in sport. According to Martindale & Uk, (2020), coverage of female athletes is frequently sexualized or focused on their appearance, family life, and “femininity” rather than athletic performance. Pope et al., (2024) and Sun, (2023) further demonstrate that this trend is not exclusive to a particular cultural setting, as women’s sports globally receive only a fraction of the coverage devoted to men’s sports even during major events such as the Olympics.

Recent scholarship, however, has begun to interrogate not only underrepresentation but also the nature and consequences of the frames applied to female athletes and journalists. (Martindale & Uk, 2020) argues that symbolic marginalization operates at multiple levels through omission, trivialization, and the reinforcement of patriarchal values. Vezzali et al., (2023) and Boczek et al., (2023) find that even as some quantitative gains are made in women’s sports coverage, qualitative biases remain entrenched, with coverage that emphasizes attractiveness, emotions, or “novelty” rather than athletic skill.

Women Journalists in Sports: Barriers and Agency

The challenges facing women in sports journalism are well documented. Baloch et al., (2024) and Ahmed et al., (2024) detail how women in Pakistani sports media face multiple forms of discrimination: exclusion from important assignments, sexual harassment, unequal pay, and a lack of professional mentorship. Hafeez & Zahid, (2020) identify not only institutional barriers but also cultural norms that restrict women’s entry and progression within newsrooms.

Globally, female sports journalists are often relegated to “soft news,” denied access to high-profile events, and judged more harshly by colleagues and audiences alike (Hardin, 2013; Lacković et al., 2022).

(Köhn, 2022) notes that in many contexts, the presence of women in the newsroom does not automatically translate into cultural change, as informal networks and implicit biases remain powerful.

Despite these barriers, female journalists have developed strategies to navigate and challenge exclusion. Radmann & A Sätre, (2024) and (Sheehan & Kitching, 2024) report that women often build informal support networks, cultivate specialized expertise, and leverage digital platforms to gain visibility. The work of Crawford et al., (2019) and Hardin, (2013) highlights how the presence of women can improve the depth and diversity of sports coverage, though such progress is often fragile.

Representation of Female Athletes in the Media

The portrayal of female athletes is a central focus of gender and sports media studies. Arooj et al., (2022) and Yaseen & M Asghar, (2023) document that, in Pakistan, media coverage of women’s sports is rare, event-driven, and often characterized by stereotypes. When female athletes are covered, stories frequently highlight their appearance, marital status, or “exceptionalism,” rather than their sporting achievements (Martindale & Uk, 2020; Ullah et al., 2016).

International studies echo these findings, with Sun, (2023) and Vezzali et al., (2023) noting that coverage of women’s sports tends to spike only during major international competitions and quickly declines thereafter. Osborne et al., (2021) and Toffoletti & H Thorpe, (2018) emphasize that social and digital

media have enabled some female athletes to resist traditional frames, using their own platforms to foreground their athleticism, activism, and achievements.

Intersectionality: Class, Region, and Identity

Intersectional perspectives are increasingly central to contemporary research on women in sports journalism. Baloch et al., (2024) and Radmann & A Sätre, (2024) underscore that women's experiences are shaped by intersecting identities class, ethnicity, rural-urban divides, and religious background. Hafeez & Zahid, (2020) argue that most research in Pakistan focuses on elite, urban journalists, neglecting those in less visible or more conservative settings.

Comparative studies (Antunovic, 2023; Sarkar et al., 2024) show that while patterns of exclusion and stereotyping are broadly similar across South Asia, the specific constraints and possibilities for women differ by context. In Pakistan, for example, family approval and community reputation are often decisive factors in women's participation in both sports and journalism (Ahmed et al., 2024).

Digital Media, Activism, and New Frontiers

The rise of digital platforms has created both opportunities and risks for gender equality in sports journalism. Toffoletti & H Thorpe, (2018) and Grabmüllerová, (2022) argue that social media can democratize sports coverage, enabling women journalists and athletes to bypass traditional gatekeepers, build audiences, and mobilize support. Hashtag campaigns and online advocacy have succeeded in raising awareness about discrimination and pushing for policy change (Osborne et al., 2021).

However, digital spaces are also sites of intensified harassment and surveillance. Ayhan & Demir, (2025) and Osborne et al., (2021) document widespread online abuse targeting women journalists and athletes in Pakistan and beyond. The threat of reputational damage or physical violence serves as a powerful deterrent for women seeking to engage in public debate.

Institutional Reform and Policy Responses

Efforts to address gender inequality in sports media include both institutional and policy interventions. Ahmed et al., (2024) and Khan et al., (2024) discuss the introduction of anti-harassment policies, gender-sensitive hiring practices, and professional development programs in some Pakistani media houses. However, these reforms are often superficial or unevenly enforced, and organizational resistance remains high (Baloch et al., 2024).

Theoretical and Methodological Innovations

Contemporary research in this field is increasingly interdisciplinary and methodologically diverse. Scholars draw on feminist theory, critical discourse analysis, media framing, and intersectionality to examine the complex interplay of gender, power, and representation (Antunovic, 2023; Savaroliyaei, 2024; Tabassum et al., 2023). There is also growing attention to the limitations of existing methodologies especially the reliance on small-scale qualitative studies and calls for more robust, comparative, and longitudinal research designs (Baloch et al., 2024; Naqvi et al., 2023).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

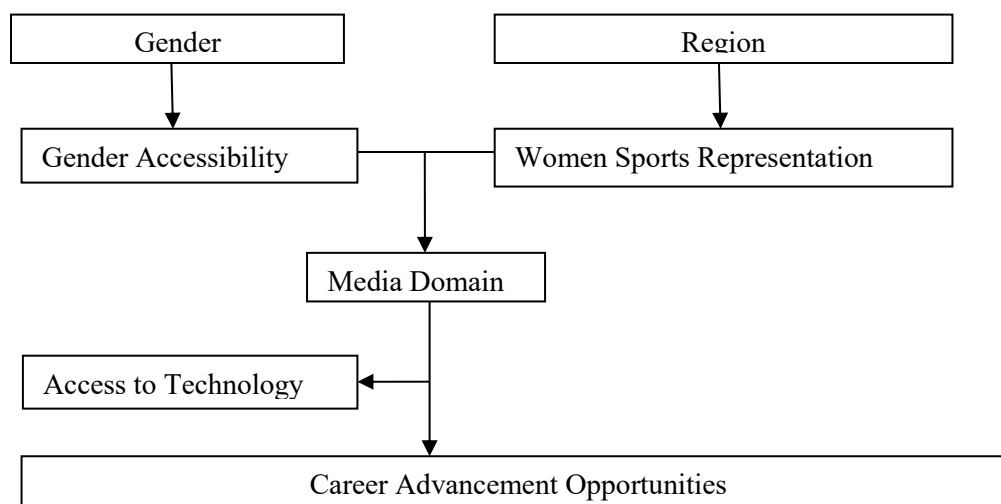
This study is grounded in the intersection of gender studies, media representation theory, and the diffusion of innovations framework, providing a lens through which to examine the professional environment of sports journalists in Pakistan. The research draws upon established theories to explain how demographic, structural, and technological factors shape perceptions and realities of access, representation, and advancement within the sports journalism profession.

Gender and Access: Social Role and Feminist Media Theory: At the heart of this research is the question of gender equality in access to sports journalism. Social role theory (Eagly, 2013) and feminist media theory posit that gendered norms and societal expectations significantly influence occupational access and experiences, especially in fields traditionally dominated by men, such as sports journalism. These theories suggest that women often face systemic barriers including discrimination, underrepresentation, and lack of institutional support that can limit their entry and progression in media careers (Byerly & Ross, 2008). Accordingly, this framework hypothesizes that gender is a central factor affecting journalists' perceptions of accessibility within the field, while also interacting with regional contexts (such as province or city) where cultural and social attitudes may differ.

Media Representation: Framing Theory: The representation of women's sports in the media is examined through the lens of framing theory (Hettlage R, 2020). This theory holds that the way issues are presented in the media shapes public perceptions and social discourse. Previous research has consistently found that women's sports are underreported and often framed in ways that reinforce gender stereotypes (Cooky & MA Messner, 2013). The framework anticipates that both journalist gender and type of media outlet (print, radio, TV, digital) are significant in shaping perceptions of women's sports coverage.

Technological Change: Diffusion of Innovations and Digital Divide: (Rogers, 2003) diffusion of innovations theory underpins the study's focus on digital transformation within sports journalism. This theory describes how new technologies are adopted and how access to such innovations can create disparities in professional opportunities a phenomenon known as the "digital divide" (van Dijk, 2006). In the context of Pakistani sports journalism, access to digital tools and high-speed internet is hypothesized to be a powerful enabler of career advancement and professional satisfaction, potentially offsetting traditional barriers.

Conceptual Framework



Based on the above theories and the conceptual framework, the study models the following relationships:

- Gender and region are hypothesized to influence perceptions of access to sports journalism and representation of women's sports.
- Type of media domain is expected to moderate these perceptions and experiences, given differing editorial policies, cultures, and audiences.
- Access to technology is predicted to be a key driver of perceived career advancement opportunities in the digital era.
- Perceptions of gender equality and women's sports coverage are also expected to be associated with openness to digital career opportunities.

This integrated framework recognizes that the experiences of sports journalists are shaped by a combination of demographic, structural, and technological factors. By analyzing the interplay among these variables, the study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of both persistent challenges and emerging opportunities in Pakistani sports journalism.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employed a quantitative research design using a structured survey questionnaire to investigate the perceptions of sports journalists across Pakistan regarding gender accessibility, representation of women's sports, access to technology, and career advancement opportunities. The survey-based approach enabled the collection of standardized data to quantitatively analyze relationships among demographic, socio-economic, geographic, and technological factors.

Population and Sample: The target population for this study comprised professional sports journalists working across various media platforms in Pakistan, including print, radio, television, digital, and hybrid outlets. A total of 460 respondents participated in the research, representing diverse provinces and regions of Pakistan. This sample size is adequate to ensure statistical power for inferential analyses such as Chi-square tests and logistic regression.

Sampling Technique: A non-probability purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used to recruit participants with relevant professional experience in sports journalism. Efforts were made to include journalists from different genders, regions, and media outlet types to capture a comprehensive profile of the profession. Data collection was conducted through online and offline channels, leveraging networks within press clubs, journalism associations, and social media groups related to sports media.

Data Collection Instrument: Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed based on the research objectives and literature review. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions covering the following key areas:

- Demographic information (gender, age, marital status, region)
- Professional profile (media domain type, years of experience)
- Perceptions of gender accessibility in sports journalism

- Views on the adequacy of women's sports coverage in the media
- Access to digital tools and technology
- Perceived impact of digital platforms on career advancement

The questionnaire was pre-tested with a small group of sports journalists to ensure clarity and validity of items before full-scale administration.

Data Collection Procedure: Data collection occurred over a period of one year. The survey was distributed electronically via email, social media, and professional networks, as well as physically in press clubs and media houses in major cities. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and confidentiality of responses was assured.

Data Analysis: Data were entered and analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations) were computed to summarize respondents' demographic characteristics and key variables.

Inferential statistical tests were conducted to examine relationships and differences, including:

- **Chi-square tests** to assess associations between categorical variables such as gender, region, media outlet type, and perceptions.
- **Cross-tabulations** for detailed exploration of variable interactions.
- **Logistic regression analysis** to identify predictors of perceptions about digital tools and career advancement.
- The significance level was set at $p < 0.05$ for all statistical tests.

Ethical Considerations: This study adhered to ethical standards for research involving human subjects. Participants were informed about the study's purpose and assured of anonymity and confidentiality. Participation was voluntary, and respondents had the right to withdraw at any time without consequence. Data were securely stored and used solely for academic purposes.

Limitations of the Methodology: The study employed purposive sampling, which may limit the generalizability of findings to the broader population of sports journalists in Pakistan. Self-reported data could be subject to response bias. However, efforts to reach a diverse and sizable sample mitigate these limitations to some extent.

DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive Analysis

Table 1. Gender

Category	Frequency	Percentage %	Mean	Std. Deviation
Male	276	60	1.41	.505
Female	181	39.3		
Transgender	3	.7		
Total	460	100.0		

In table 1, the gender distribution of respondents in this study indicates that a majority of participants were male, accounting for 60% (n=276) of the total sample. Female sports journalists comprised 39.3% (n=181) of respondents, while a small proportion identified as transgender, making up 0.7% (n=3) of the sample. The mean value of the gender variable was 1.41 with a standard deviation of 0.51, reflecting that the responses were predominantly clustered around the male and female categories, with very limited representation from transgender individuals. This demographic profile suggests that while both male and female perspectives are included, the field of sports journalism in Pakistan remains male-dominated, and the representation of gender minorities is notably low.

Table 2. Age Group

Category	Frequency	Percentage %	Mean	Std. Deviation
Under 25	31	6.7	2.88	.996
25-34	143	31.1		
35-44	160	34.8		
45-54	103	22.4		
55 or Older	23	5.0		

In table 2, the age distribution of respondents reveals that sports journalists in the sample represent a wide range of age groups. The largest proportion falls within the 35–44 years age group, which constitutes 34.8% (n=160) of the total sample. This is followed closely by those aged 25–34 years, making up 31.1% (n=143), and those aged 45–54 years at 22.4% (n=103). Journalists under the age of 25 account for 6.7% (n=31), while those aged 55 or older represent 5.0% (n=23) of the sample. The mean age group code is 2.88 with a standard deviation of 0.996, indicating that the majority of respondents are concentrated in the middle age categories (25–54 years). These findings suggest that sports journalism in Pakistan is primarily practiced by individuals in their mid-career stages, with comparatively fewer very young or older professionals participating in the field.

Table 3. Marital Status

Category	Frequency	Percentage %	Mean	Std. Deviation
Single	123	26.7	1.97	.786
Married	254	55.2		
Divorced	57	12.4		
Widow	26	5.7		

In table 3, the analysis of marital status among respondents shows that a majority of sports journalists in the sample are married, accounting for 55.2% (n=254) of the participants. Those who are single constitute 26.7% (n=123), while 12.4% (n=57) of respondents reported being divorced. Additionally, widowed journalists represent 5.7% (n=26) of the total sample. The mean value for marital status is 1.97 with a standard deviation of 0.79, indicating that most respondents are clustered around the married and single categories. These results suggest that over half of sports journalists in Pakistan are married, with a substantial proportion also identifying as single or having experienced a change in marital status through divorce or widowhood.

Table 4. Which province of Pakistan do you belong to?

Category	Frequency	Percentage %	Mean	Std. Deviation
Punjab	165	35.9	2.92	2.149
Sindh	122	26.5		
Balochistan	14	3.0		
KPK	47	10.2		
Gilgit Baltistan	27	5.9		
AJK	25	5.4		
Islamabad	60	13.0		

In table 4, analysis of the respondents' provincial backgrounds reveals that sports journalists in Pakistan hail from diverse regions, with the largest proportion belonging to Punjab, which accounts for 35.9% (n=165) of the sample. Sindh is the next most represented province at 26.5% (n=122), followed by Islamabad at 13.0% (n=60), and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) at 10.2% (n=47). Smaller proportions of journalists come from Gilgit Baltistan (5.9%, n=27), Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) (5.4%, n=25), and Balochistan (3.0%, n=14). The mean provincial code is 2.92 with a standard deviation of 2.15, indicating a moderate spread of respondents across regions, though the majority are concentrated in Punjab and Sindh. This distribution suggests that while sports journalism is practiced nationwide, representation is highest from the more populous provinces.

Table 5. Which type of media outlet do you primarily work for?

Category	Frequency	Percentage %	Mean	Std. Deviation
Print	112	24.3	2.23	.923
Radio	170	37.0		
Television	136	29.6		
Both (Digital & Traditional)	42	9.1		

In table 5, the distribution of primary media outlets among sports journalists shows that the largest segment works in radio, representing 37.0% (n=170) of the sample. This is followed by those working in television, who make up 29.6% (n=136), and journalists associated with print media, comprising 24.3% (n=112). Additionally, 9.1% (n=42) of respondents reported working with both digital and traditional media outlets. The mean value for media outlet type is 2.23 with a standard deviation of 0.92, indicating that most respondents are clustered around the radio, television, and print categories, with fewer engaged in multi-platform roles. These findings suggest that radio and television remain the dominant platforms for sports journalism in Pakistan, while a smaller but notable proportion of journalists are engaged in both digital and traditional forms of media.

Table 6. Sports journalism practice equally accessible for both genders in your region?

Category	Frequency	Percentage %	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yes	144	31.3	1.69	.464
No	316	68.7		

Table 6 represents, when respondents were asked whether sports journalism practice is equally accessible for both genders in their region, a clear majority—68.7% (n=316)—reported that it is not equally accessible. Only 31.3% (n=144) of participants believed that both genders have equal access to sports journalism opportunities in their area. The mean value for this variable is 1.69 with a standard deviation

of 0.46, reflecting that most responses leaned towards “No.” These findings highlight a significant perceived gender gap in access to sports journalism across regions in Pakistan, suggesting persistent barriers for women and possibly gender minorities within the profession.

Table 7. Coverage of women’s sports in Pakistan adequately represented in the media?

Category	Frequency	Percentage %	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yes	195	42.4	1.58	.495
No	265	57.6		

In table 7, the responses regarding the adequacy of women’s sports coverage in Pakistani media indicate that a majority of journalists perceive coverage as insufficient. Specifically, 57.6% (n=265) of respondents stated that women’s sports are not adequately represented in the media, while 42.4% (n=195) believed that coverage is adequate. The mean value for this variable is 1.58 with a standard deviation of 0.50, showing that the predominant view among respondents leans toward a perception of inadequate representation. This finding suggests ongoing challenges and underrepresentation of women’s sports in the Pakistani media landscape, as viewed by the country’s sports journalists.

Table 8. I have access to the latest technology for my sports journalism work

Category	Frequency	Percentage %	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yes	311	67.6	1.32	.468
No	149	32.4		

In table 8, the findings reveal that a substantial majority of sports journalists report having access to the latest technology necessary for their work. Specifically, 67.6% (n=311) of respondents indicated that they have access to essential digital tools and high-speed internet, while 32.4% (n=149) stated that they do not. The mean value for this variable is 1.32 with a standard deviation of 0.47, suggesting that most responses are concentrated around “Yes.” These results highlight that although a significant proportion of sports journalists are equipped with modern technology, nearly one-third still lack access to important digital resources.

Table 9. Digital media offer better career opportunities for sports journalists compared to traditional media?

Category	Frequency	Percentage %	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yes	346	75.2	1.25	.432
No	114	24.8		

In table 9, the data indicate that a strong majority of sports journalists in Pakistan believe that digital media provide better career opportunities compared to traditional media. Specifically, 75.2% (n=346) of respondents agreed that digital platforms offer superior prospects, while only 24.8% (n=114) did not share this view. The mean for this variable is 1.25 with a standard deviation of 0.43, reflecting that responses are heavily skewed toward “Yes.” These findings underscore the growing importance and perceived advantages of digital media in shaping career trajectories for sports journalists, with most professionals seeing the digital domain as more promising than conventional media outlets.

Statistical Analysis

Table 10. Cross-tabulation: Gender × Perceived Gender Accessibility

Gender? * Sports journalism practice equally accessible for both genders in your region?					
			Sports journalism practice equally accessible for both genders in your region?		
			Yes	No	Total
Gender	Male	Gender	31.9%	68.1%	100.0%
		Perceived Accessibility	61.1%	59.5%	60.0%
	Female	Gender	29.8%	70.2%	100.0%
		Perceived Accessibility	37.5%	40.2%	39.3%
	Transgender	Gender	66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
		Perceived Accessibility	1.4%	0.3%	0.7%
Total			31.3%	68.7%	
			100.0%	100.0%	

In table 10, the cross-tabulation between gender and the perception of equal accessibility to sports journalism in respondents' regions reveals notable differences by gender. Among male sports journalists, 31.9% believe that sports journalism is equally accessible for both genders, while 68.1% do not. Similarly, 29.8% of female journalists perceive equal accessibility, with a larger proportion 70.2% reporting that access is not equal. Interestingly, the small number of transgender respondents shows a contrasting pattern: 66.7% feel that sports journalism is equally accessible for all genders, while 33.3% do not; however, this result should be interpreted with caution due to the very low representation of transgender participants.

When looking at the overall distribution, both men and women overwhelmingly perceive sports journalism as not equally accessible to all genders, with only about one-third in each group responding affirmatively. This suggests that perceptions of gender inequality in access to sports journalism are widespread and shared across both male and female journalists in Pakistan. The pattern is consistent across both major gender groups, highlighting a persistent challenge in achieving gender equality in the profession.

Table 11. Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.970 ^a	2	.374
Likelihood Ratio	1.804	2	.406
Linear-by-Linear Association	.012	1	.914
N of Valid Cases	460		

a. 2 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .94.

In table 11, the Pearson Chi-Square test was conducted to examine the association between gender and the perception of whether sports journalism is equally accessible for both genders. The results indicate that the relationship between these two variables is not statistically significant, $\chi^2(2, N = 460) = 1.97$, $p = .374$. This means that there is no significant difference in how male, female, and transgender journalists perceive gender-based accessibility within sports journalism in their regions.

Additionally, the note in the output highlights that two cells (33.3%) have expected counts less than 5, which suggests that results for the transgender category should be interpreted cautiously due to the very small number of transgender respondents. Overall, both men and women similarly perceive sports journalism as not equally accessible to all genders, and these differences are not statistically meaningful according to the chi-square test.

Crosstab and Chi-square combine results: The cross-tabulation analysis between gender and the perception of equal accessibility to sports journalism in respondents' regions shows that a substantial majority of both male and female journalists do not believe that sports journalism is equally accessible to all genders. Specifically, only 31.9% of males and 29.8% of females reported that sports journalism is equally accessible, while the vast majority in both groups 68.1% of males and 70.2% of females indicated that it is not. Among the small group of transgender respondents, 66.7% perceived equal accessibility, though this finding should be interpreted with caution due to their limited representation.

Despite these observed differences, the Pearson Chi-square test indicates that the association between gender and perceived accessibility is not statistically significant, $\chi^2(2, N = 460) = 1.97, p = .374$. This suggests that perceptions of accessibility do not differ meaningfully across gender groups in this sample. In other words, both male and female sports journalists largely share the same view regarding the lack of gender-equal access to sports journalism in their regions.

Overall, the findings highlight a widespread perception of gender-based barriers in sports journalism, but this perception does not vary significantly by gender.

Table 12. Cross-tabulation: Region × Perceived Gender Accessibility

Region * Sports journalism practice equally accessible for both genders in your region?			Sports journalism practice equally accessible for both genders in your region?		
			Yes	No	Total
Which province of Pakistan do you belong to?	Punjab	Region	30.9%	69.1%	100.0%
		Perceived Accessibility	35.4%	36.1%	35.9%
	Sindh	Region	32.8%	67.2%	100.0%
		Perceived Accessibility	27.8%	25.9%	26.5%
	Balochistan	Region	14.3%	85.7%	100.0%
		Perceived Accessibility	1.4%	3.8%	3.0%
	KPK	Region	21.3%	78.7%	100.0%
		Perceived Accessibility	6.9%	11.7%	10.2%
	Gilgit Baltistan	Region	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%
		Perceived Accessibility	6.3%	5.7%	5.9%
	AJK	Region	28.0%	72.0%	100.0%
		Perceived Accessibility	4.9%	5.7%	5.4%
	Islamabad	Region	41.7%	58.3%	100.0%
		Perceived Accessibility	17.4%	11.1%	13.0%
Total			31.3%	68.7%	100.0%
			100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

In table 12, the cross-tabulation between province of origin and the perception of equal accessibility to sports journalism for both genders reveals some regional differences, though the overall pattern is

consistent with the national trend. In every province, a majority of respondents report that sports journalism is **not** equally accessible for both genders. Notably, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) display the lowest levels of perceived gender equality, with only 14.3% and 21.3% of journalists respectively indicating that access is equal, while 85.7% in Balochistan and 78.7% in KPK say it is not. Punjab and Sindh are slightly above the national average, with 30.9% and 32.8% of journalists perceiving equal access. Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) have similar levels to the larger provinces, while Islamabad stands out with the highest proportion of journalists perceiving gender-equal access (41.7%).

Despite these regional variations, the overarching trend is clear: in every region of Pakistan, a majority of journalists do not perceive sports journalism as equally accessible for both genders. This points to a nationwide perception of gender-based barriers in access to sports journalism, with certain provinces particularly Balochistan and KPK perceived as facing even greater inequalities.

Table 13. Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.395 ^a	6	.286
Likelihood Ratio	7.702	6	.261
Linear-by-Linear Association	.731	1	.393
N of Valid Cases	460		

a. 1 cells (7.1%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.38.

In table 13, A Pearson Chi-Square test was conducted to examine whether there is a statistically significant association between the respondent's province of origin and their perception of gender-equal access to sports journalism. The test yielded a chi-square value of 7.40 with 6 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.286, indicating that the association is not statistically significant at the conventional 0.05 threshold. This suggests that, although there are some observed differences in the proportions of journalists reporting equal access across provinces, these differences are not large enough to conclude that region significantly affects perceptions of gender-based accessibility to sports journalism in this sample.

Additionally, the test result notes that only one cell (7.1%) had an expected count less than 5, which means the test results are generally reliable. Overall, the findings indicate that perceptions of gender-equal access are similarly distributed across provinces, and regional differences observed in the cross-tabulation are not statistically meaningful.

Crosstab and Chi-square combine results: The cross-tabulation between respondents' provinces and their perceptions of gender-equal access to sports journalism reveals some regional variation, but a clear national pattern. Across all provinces, the majority of journalists report that sports journalism is not equally accessible for both genders. The perception of inequality is most pronounced in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), where only 14.3% and 21.3% of respondents, respectively, believe that access is equal. Other provinces such as Punjab, Sindh, Gilgit Baltistan, and Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) show slightly higher though still minority proportions reporting equal access, while Islamabad has the highest rate, with 41.7% perceiving gender-equal access.

Despite these observed differences in proportions across provinces, the Pearson Chi-square test found that the association between province and perception of gender-equal accessibility is not statistically significant ($\chi^2(6, N = 460) = 7.40, p = .286$). This means that, statistically, regional differences in

perceived gender equality in sports journalism access are not meaningful in this sample. In summary, although the sense of unequal access is widespread in every region and appears especially acute in certain provinces the differences between provinces are not significant enough to conclude that region is a major factor influencing these perceptions.

Table 14. Crosstabs: Women Sports Representation × Gender

Gender * Coverage of women’s sports in Pakistan adequately represented in the media?					
			Coverage of women’s sports in Pakistan adequately represented in the media?		
			Yes	No	Total
Gender	Male	Gender	45.7%	54.3%	100.0%
		Women sports representation	64.6%	56.6%	60.0%
	Female	Gender	36.5%	63.5%	100.0%
		Women sports representation	33.8%	43.4%	39.3%
	Transgender	Gender	100.0%		100.0%
		Women sports representation	1.5%		0.7%
Total			42.4%	57.6%	100.0%
			100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

In table 14, the cross-tabulation analysis between gender and perceptions of the adequacy of women's sports coverage in the media highlights some differences between male and female sports journalists. Among male respondents, 45.7% believe that women's sports are adequately represented in the media, while a slightly larger proportion (54.3%) believe they are not. In contrast, only 36.5% of female journalists feel that women's sports receive adequate media coverage, with 63.5% indicating that coverage is inadequate. This suggests that female journalists are somewhat more likely than their male counterparts to perceive women's sports as underrepresented in the media. The single transgender respondent(s) all reported that coverage is adequate, but their low number (n=3) limits interpretability.

Overall, while both male and female journalists are more likely to view women's sports coverage as inadequate, this view is more pronounced among women. This pattern points toward a gendered perception of underrepresentation, with female journalists demonstrating a stronger concern about the visibility of women's sports in the Pakistani media landscape.

Table 15. Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.883 ^a	2	.019
Likelihood Ratio	8.987	2	.011
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.847	1	.174
N of Valid Cases	460		

a. 2 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.27.

In table 15, the Pearson Chi-Square test was conducted to examine the association between gender and perceptions of whether women's sports are adequately represented in the media. The test result, $\chi^2(2, N = 460) = 7.88$, $p = .019$, indicates a statistically significant association between gender and perception of women's sports coverage. Since the p-value is less than the conventional 0.05 threshold, we can conclude

that male and female sports journalists differ in their views on the adequacy of women's sports representation in the media.

This finding supports the pattern observed in the cross-tabulation, where a higher proportion of female journalists perceive women's sports coverage as inadequate compared to their male counterparts. However, it is also noted that 33.3% of the cells have expected counts less than 5, primarily due to the low number of transgender respondents, which suggests some caution in interpreting results for this group. Nonetheless, the overall association remains significant.

Crosstab and Chi-square combine results: The cross-tabulation between gender and the perception of whether women's sports are adequately represented in the media reveals notable gender differences among sports journalists in Pakistan. Among male journalists, 45.7% believe that women's sports are adequately covered, while 54.3% feel they are not. In comparison, only 36.5% of female journalists consider the coverage adequate, with a larger majority (63.5%) perceiving it as inadequate. This indicates that female journalists are more likely than their male counterparts to view women's sports coverage as insufficient. The single transgender respondent(s) reported that coverage is adequate, but due to the very small sample size, this finding should be interpreted cautiously.

These observed differences are supported by the results of the Pearson Chi-Square test, which found a statistically significant association between gender and perception of women's sports coverage ($\chi^2(2, N = 460) = 7.88, p = .019$). This significance suggests that gender meaningfully influences how sports journalists view the adequacy of women's sports representation in the media. However, caution is advised in interpreting results related to the transgender category due to the low number of responses in that group. The findings demonstrate that female sports journalists are significantly more likely than males to perceive women's sports as inadequately represented in the media, highlighting a gendered difference in perspective within the profession.

Table 16. Women Sports Representation * Media Domain

Media domain * Coverage of women's sports in Pakistan adequately represented in the media?			Coverage of women's sports in Pakistan adequately represented in the media?		
			Yes	No	Total
Which type of media outlet do you primarily work for?	Print	Media domain	46.4%	53.6%	100.0%
		Women sports representation	26.7%	22.6%	24.3%
	Radio	Media domain	25.3%	74.7%	100.0%
		Women sports representation	22.1%	47.9%	37.0%
	Television	Media domain	59.6%	40.4%	100.0%
		Women sports representation	41.5%	20.8%	29.6%
	Both (Digital & Traditional)	Media domain	45.2%	54.8%	100.0%
		Women sports representation	9.7%	8.7%	9.1%
Total			42.4%	57.6%	100.0%
			100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

In table 16, the cross-tabulation between the type of media outlet and perceptions of women's sports coverage in Pakistan reveals marked differences across media platforms. Among journalists working in television, 59.6% believe that women's sports are adequately represented in the media, the highest proportion among all outlet types, while 40.4% believe coverage is inadequate. In contrast, radio journalists are the most likely to perceive coverage as insufficient: only 25.3% consider it adequate, while a substantial 74.7% believe women's sports are not adequately represented. Print journalists and those working in both digital and traditional media are more evenly split, with about 46% in each group reporting that coverage is adequate and 54% stating it is not.

These results indicate that television journalists have a notably more positive view of women's sports coverage compared to their peers in radio, print, and hybrid media. Meanwhile, radio journalists are significantly more critical of the current level of women's sports representation in the Pakistani media landscape. Overall, perceptions of adequacy in women's sports coverage vary considerably depending on the type of media outlet in which the journalist works, with the greatest satisfaction reported among those in television and the highest dissatisfaction among those in radio.

Table 17. Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	37.649 ^a	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	38.646	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.709	1	.030
N of Valid Cases	460		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 17.80.

In table 17, the Pearson Chi-Square test was conducted to assess the relationship between the type of media outlet sports journalists primarily work for and their perception of whether women's sports are adequately represented in the media. The test yielded a highly significant result ($\chi^2(3, N = 460) = 37.65, p < .001$), indicating a strong association between media outlet type and perception of women's sports coverage. This means that journalists' views on the adequacy of women's sports representation in the media differ significantly based on whether they work in print, radio, television, or a combination of digital and traditional media.

Importantly, all expected cell counts were above five, confirming that the test results are robust and reliable. These findings reinforce the observed differences in the cross-tabulation and suggest that the type of media outlet plays a significant role in shaping how journalists evaluate the visibility of women's sports in Pakistani media.

Crosstab and Chi-square combine results: The analysis of the relationship between the type of media outlet and perceptions of women's sports coverage reveals significant differences among journalists working in print, radio, television, and both digital and traditional media. Television journalists are the most likely to perceive women's sports coverage as adequate, with 59.6% expressing satisfaction, while only 40.4% view it as inadequate. In contrast, radio journalists hold the most critical view: just 25.3% believe women's sports are adequately covered, compared to a substantial 74.7% who do not. Print journalists and those working in both digital and traditional media show a more balanced distribution, with roughly 46% in each group considering coverage adequate and 54% believing it is insufficient.

These observed differences are strongly supported by the Pearson Chi-Square test, which confirms a statistically significant association between media outlet type and perception of women's sports coverage ($\chi^2(3, N = 460) = 37.65, p < .001$). This result demonstrates that journalists' assessments of the adequacy of women's sports coverage vary considerably depending on their primary media platform. In summary, television journalists are notably more satisfied with women's sports representation, while radio journalists are the most dissatisfied, and these differences are statistically meaningful.

Table 18. Women sports representation * Tech Access

Women sports representation * Digital tools and platforms play a role in advancing your career in sports journalism?					
			Digital tools and platforms play a role in advancing your career in sports journalism?		
			Yes	No	Total
Coverage of women’s sports in Pakistan adequately represented in the media?	Yes	Women Sports representation	87.7%	12.3%	100.0 %
		Tech Access	50.4%	19.8%	42.4%
	No	Women Sports representation	63.4%	36.6%	100.0%
		Tech Access	49.6%	80.2%	57.6%
Total			73.7%	26.3%	100.0%
			100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

In table 18, the cross-tabulation analysis reveals a notable relationship between journalists' perceptions of women's sports coverage in the media and their views on the role of digital tools in advancing their careers. Among those who believe that women's sports are adequately represented in the media, a striking 87.7% also feel that digital tools and platforms play a role in their career advancement, while only 12.3% do not share this view. In contrast, among those who perceive women's sports coverage as inadequate, a smaller proportion (63.4%) agree that digital tools aid their career, while a significant 36.6% do not.

Overall, journalists who are satisfied with women's sports coverage are much more likely to recognize the positive impact of digital tools and platforms on their professional growth, compared to those who view women's sports as underrepresented. This suggests a possible link between positive perceptions of media inclusivity and greater confidence in the career-enhancing power of digital technologies within sports journalism.

Table 19. Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	34.208 ^a	1	.000		
Continuity Correction ^b	32.966	1	.000		
Likelihood Ratio	36.534	1	.000		
Fisher's Exact Test				.000	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	34.133	1	.000		
N of Valid Cases	460				

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 51.29.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

In table 19, the Pearson Chi-Square test was conducted to assess the association between journalists' perceptions of women's sports coverage and their belief that digital tools and platforms play a role in career advancement. The test produced a highly significant result ($\chi^2(1, N = 460) = 34.21, p < .001$), indicating a strong relationship between these variables. The result is further supported by the likelihood ratio and Fisher's Exact Test, both of which are also highly significant ($p = .000$). This means that journalists' views about the adequacy of women's sports coverage are closely linked to their perceptions of how much digital tools and platforms contribute to their career growth.

Importantly, all expected cell counts were above five, indicating the test is statistically robust. These results confirm that those who view women's sports coverage as adequate are much more likely to see digital technologies as beneficial for career advancement, while those who perceive inadequate coverage are more skeptical of the positive impact of digital tools on their professional progress.

Crosstab and Chi-square combine results: The cross-tabulation analysis shows a strong relationship between how sports journalists view the coverage of women's sports in the media and their beliefs about the role of digital tools in advancing their careers. Among those who believe that women's sports are adequately represented, a large majority (87.7%) also feel that digital tools and platforms have played a role in their career growth. In contrast, among journalists who see women's sports coverage as inadequate, only 63.4% believe digital tools aid career advancement, while a considerable 36.6% do not share this view. This indicates that satisfaction with women's sports coverage is closely linked to a more positive assessment of digital tools' professional benefits.

These observed differences are strongly supported by the Pearson Chi-Square test, which reveals a highly significant association between the two variables ($\chi^2(1, N = 460) = 34.21, p < .001$). The statistical significance confirms that journalists' attitudes toward media inclusivity and their perceived value of digital technologies in career advancement are closely connected. In summary, journalists who are satisfied with women's sports coverage are significantly more likely to see digital tools and platforms as advantageous for their careers as those who are dissatisfied with such coverage.

Table 20. Logistic Regression

Statistic / Variable	Step 0	Step 1
Classification Table (Observed vs. Predicted)		
Yes correctly classified (%)	100.0	90.6
No correctly classified (%)	0.0	79.3
Overall Percentage Correct	73.7	87.6
Variables in the Equation		
Constant (B, Sig., Exp(B))	-1.030, .000, 0.357	-6.115, .000, 0.002
I have access to the latest technology (B, Sig., Exp(B))	—	3.489, .000, 32.761
Your Gender? (B, Sig., Exp(B))	—	0.881, .003, 2.414
Which type of media outlet do you primarily work for? (B, Sig., Exp(B))	—	-0.616, .000, 0.540

Statistic / Variable	Step 0	Step 1
Variables not in the Equation (Score, Sig.)		
I have access to the latest technology	189.340, .000	—
Your Gender?	6.152, .013	—
Which type of media outlet do you primarily work for?	12.211, .000	—
Overall Statistics (Score, Sig.)	202.549, .000	—
Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients (Chi-square, Sig.)		209.535, .000
Model Summary		
-2 Log likelihood		320.584
Cox & Snell R Square		.366
Nagelkerke R Square		.535

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: I have access to the latest technology (e.g. necessary digital tools and high-speed internet) for my sports journalism work, Your Gender? Which type of media outlet do you primarily work for?

Legend: **B** = Regression coefficient, **Sig.** = Significance level (p-value), **Exp(B)** = Odds Ratio

In table 20, the logistic regression analysis examined how access to technology, gender, and media outlet type predict whether sports journalists believe digital tools and platforms play a role in advancing their careers.

Model Performance: The model is highly effective, with an overall correct classification rate of 87.6%. Specifically, it correctly predicts 90.6% of respondents who answered “Yes” and 79.3% of those who answered “No” regarding the role of digital tools in career advancement. The model’s fit is further supported by significant Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients ($\chi^2(3) = 209.535$, $p < .001$), and a Nagelkerke R Square of 0.535, indicating that the model explains over 53% of the variance in journalists’ responses.

Key Predictors

- **Access to Technology:** Access to the latest technology (such as digital tools and high-speed internet) is the strongest predictor ($B = 3.489$, $p < .001$, $\text{Exp}(B) = 32.76$). This means that journalists with access to technology are over 32 times more likely to perceive digital tools and platforms as advancing their careers, compared to those without such access.
- **Gender:** Gender also plays a significant role ($B = 0.881$, $p = .003$, $\text{Exp}(B) = 2.41$). This suggests that, controlling for other factors, one gender (likely males if coded as 1) is more than twice as likely to believe in the positive role of digital tools for career advancement.
- **Type of Media Domain:** The type of media outlet is also significant ($B = -0.616$, $p < .001$, $\text{Exp}(B) = 0.54$). The negative coefficient implies that journalists working in certain outlet types (likely traditional media, if coded as reference) are less likely to perceive digital tools as beneficial for

career advancement, compared to those working in the reference category (possibly digital or mixed platforms).

Access to technology is by far the most influential factor in shaping sports journalists' beliefs about the career benefits of digital tools and platforms. Gender and media outlet type are also significant but to a lesser extent. These findings highlight the critical role that technological access and workplace context play in the digital transformation of sports journalism careers in Pakistan.

Overall Data Analysis Results

The analysis of responses from 460 sports journalists across Pakistan provides an in-depth understanding of the demographic, professional, and perceptual landscape of the field. Males comprised the majority of respondents (60%), followed by females (39.3%) and a very small proportion identifying as transgender (0.7%). The age profile was centered around the mid-career range, with most participants between 25 and 54 years old. Over half of the journalists were married, and the largest number hailed from Punjab and Sindh provinces, reflecting the population distribution and media activity in those regions. Radio and television emerged as the most common media outlets, though substantial representation was also found in print and mixed digital-traditional platforms.

Gender Accessibility: A significant and consistent finding across the dataset is the perception of gender inequality in access to sports journalism. Nearly 69% of respondents believe that sports journalism is **not** equally accessible for both genders in their regions. This view was widely held among both male and female journalists, and persisted across provinces, including Punjab, Sindh, KPK, and Balochistan, although the proportions varied. Chi-square analyses confirmed that neither gender nor province had a statistically significant association with perceived accessibility, indicating that concerns about gendered barriers are broadly shared and not confined to any specific group or region.

Coverage of Women's Sports: A majority of sports journalists (57.6%) feel that women's sports are not adequately represented in the Pakistani media. This perception is even more pronounced among female journalists, with 63.5% expressing dissatisfaction compared to 54.3% of male journalists. The difference in perception between genders was statistically significant, suggesting that female journalists are particularly sensitive to issues of underrepresentation. The type of media outlet also made a difference: television journalists were most likely to view coverage as adequate (59.6%), while radio journalists were the least satisfied (only 25.3% perceiving coverage as adequate). These differences across outlet types were highly significant statistically, pointing to the influence of media platform on attitudes towards gender representation in sports coverage.

Technology Access and Career Advancement: Access to digital tools and high-speed internet was reported by 67.6% of journalists, though nearly one-third still lack such resources. Most journalists (75.2%) see digital media as offering better career opportunities than traditional media, underlining the profession's digital transition. There is a strong and statistically significant link between perceptions of women's sports coverage and the perceived value of digital tools: journalists who believe coverage is adequate are much more likely to see digital tools as important for career advancement.

Predictors of Belief in Digital Career Advancement: Logistic regression results show that access to technology is the most powerful predictor of whether journalists view digital platforms as advancing their careers. Journalists with access to digital resources are over 32 times more likely to see digital tools as beneficial for their professional development. Gender and media outlet type also matter—males and those

in certain types of outlets (particularly digital or mixed) are more likely to appreciate the career benefits of digital tools, while those in traditional outlets are less convinced.

Conclusion: The overall picture is one of a dynamic but challenged profession. While Pakistani sports journalism is gradually embracing digital transformation and increasingly recognizing the advantages of new technology, deep-rooted issues of gender inequality and underrepresentation of women's sports remain. Female journalists and those in radio are especially attuned to these gaps. The transition to digital media offers hope for more inclusive and empowering career opportunities but ensuring equal access to technology and addressing gender-based barriers will be crucial for the future development of the field.

DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses the major findings of the research, interprets their significance within the context of previous research, and considers their implications for sports journalism in Pakistan. It also highlights the limitations of the current study and suggests avenues for future research.

Gender Accessibility in Sports Journalism: A central objective of this study was to explore whether sports journalism in Pakistan is perceived as equally accessible to all genders. The findings indicate a persistent perception of gender inequality: almost 69% of sports journalists, regardless of their own gender or region, do not believe that the profession is equally accessible for men and women. This sentiment was shared by both male and female journalists and was consistent across provinces including Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Balochistan. The absence of a statistically significant association between gender or region and perceived accessibility underscores the systemic nature of these barriers.

These findings align with previous research documenting structural and cultural challenges faced by women in Pakistani journalism. Issues such as patriarchal norms, workplace discrimination, and lack of mentorship opportunities have historically limited women's entry and advancement in media professions. The research study suggests that, despite some progress, these barriers remain entrenched and widely recognized within the sports journalism community.

Representation of Women's Sports in the Media: Another critical area explored was the adequacy of media coverage for women's sports. The study found that 57.6% of journalists believe women's sports are underrepresented in Pakistani media, with this view significantly more prevalent among female journalists (63.5%) than males (54.3%). These gender differences were statistically significant, pointing to heightened awareness and concern among female journalists regarding the marginalization of women's sports.

The finding is consistent with global research noting the pervasive underrepresentation and stereotypical portrayal of women athletes in media coverage. In the Pakistani context, limited visibility for women's sports is often attributed to societal attitudes, resource constraints, and commercial priorities of media outlets. Notably, the present research shows that television journalists are the most likely to perceive women's sports coverage as adequate, while radio journalists are the least satisfied. This suggests that the platform through which journalists work shapes their attitudes towards gender inclusivity in sports reporting, possibly due to differences in newsroom cultures, audience expectations, and editorial policies.

Digital Media, Technology Access, and Career Advancement: The research further examined the role of digital tools and technology in shaping journalists' career opportunities. A substantial majority (67.6%) of journalists reported access to the latest technology, while 75.2% agreed that digital media offer better career opportunities than traditional platforms. Notably, the perception that digital tools and platforms

advance careers was significantly higher among those satisfied with women's sports coverage, suggesting that openness to digital transformation may be linked to broader attitudes towards inclusivity and innovation in sports journalism.

Logistic regression analysis identified access to technology as the most powerful predictor of positive attitudes towards digital career advancement. Journalists with access to digital tools were more than 32 times as likely to view digital platforms as beneficial for their careers. Gender and media outlet type were also significant predictors, with male journalists and those in digital or mixed outlets more likely to appreciate the advantages of digital media. These findings resonate with scholarship emphasizing the transformative potential of digital technologies for journalism careers, particularly in enhancing visibility, networking, and skills development.

Despite the optimism surrounding digital media, about one-third of respondents still lack adequate technological resources. This digital divide could exacerbate existing inequalities and limit professional development, especially for journalists in under-resourced organizations or regions.

Implications for Policy and Practice: The findings have important implications for policy makers, media organizations, and advocacy groups. First, the persistent perception of gender inequality and underrepresentation of women's sports demands targeted interventions, such as gender-sensitive editorial policies, mentorship programs, and campaigns promoting women's sports. Second, bridging the digital divide should be a strategic priority; investments in infrastructure and training are needed to ensure all journalists can benefit from digital opportunities. Finally, fostering diverse and inclusive newsrooms may help shift attitudes and practices towards greater gender equity and more comprehensive coverage of women's sports.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research: While this research offers valuable insights, certain limitations must be acknowledged. The use of self-reported survey data may introduce bias, and the cross-sectional design cannot establish causality. The small number of transgender respondents also limits the generalizability of findings related to gender minorities. Future research could employ qualitative methods, such as interviews or ethnography, to deepen understanding of the experiences behind these perceptions. Comparative studies across countries or sports disciplines could further enrich the analysis.

CONCLUSION

This research highlights both the progress and persistent challenges facing sports journalists in Pakistan. While the profession is gradually embracing digital transformation and new career pathways, gender inequality and limited representation of women's sports remain major concerns. Addressing these issues will require sustained attention from media leaders, policy makers, and the broader society to ensure an inclusive and equitable future for sports journalism.

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