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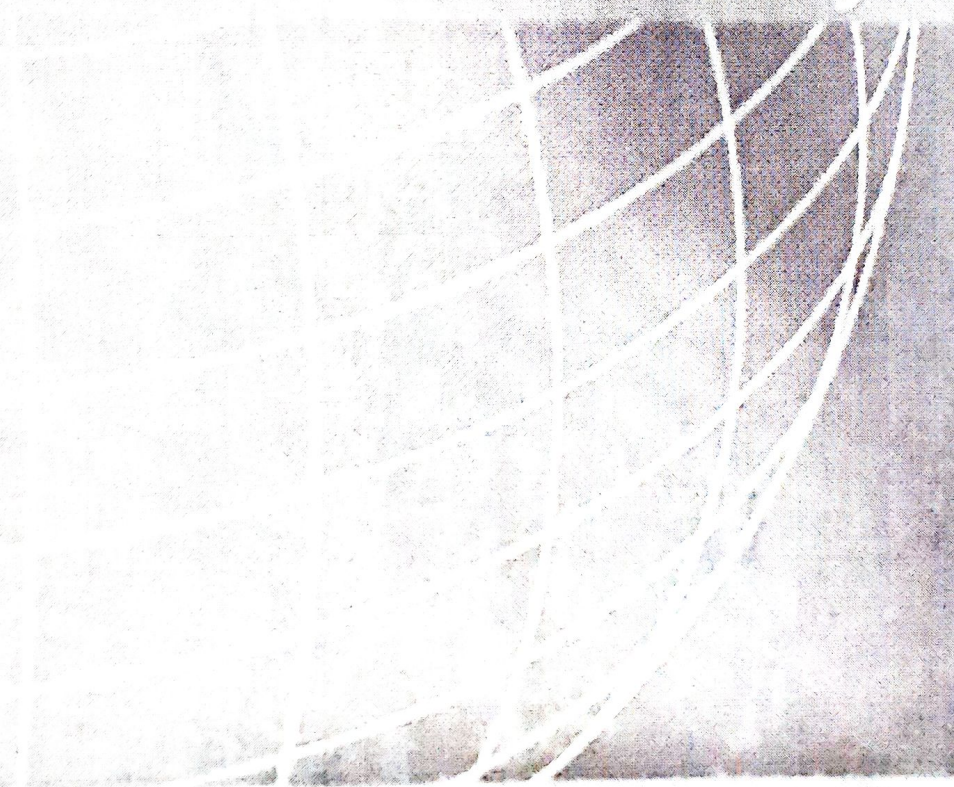
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# Women Journalists and Gender Issues at Work Place – A Study in Tamil Nadu

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## ABSTRACT

For women journalists to empower women in society, they have to be in a position to influence news content. So the status of women journalists has to be studied before one thinks of expecting them to contribute to equality. This study is an attempt to understand and analyze the participation and position of women in various forms of news media in Tamil Nadu. It has examined various gender issues confronted by women journalists at the workplace, with regard to the profession such as gender discrimination in work assignments, pay disparity, etc. and societal roles like family-career balance, male attitudes, sexual harassment, etc. It has adopted the survey research method using questionnaire as the tool for data collection. Men are preferred over women at recruitment. Electronic media exploits women journalists' pleasing personality to increase the entertainment value of news content. Women journalists are discriminated at career appraisals by the virtue of their gender. Half of women journalists are not equally paid as that of their male colleagues.

**Keywords:** Gender, Glass ceiling, Sexual harassment, English Press, Regional press/Tamil Press, Women Journalists.

## INTRODUCTION

Women empowerment may specifically refer to economic upliftment, but also to increased well-being and transformation of power relations, all depending on someone's status quo and viewpoint. Empowerment may reflect itself in women's participation in social and political activities, thus ideally empowering other women as well (Manders and Majoor 2009). Women journalists can serve as active agents in the process of empowering fellow women through gender balanced reporting and fair representation of women in news content. Since mass media possess the definite power to influence people's minds and perception about the issues pertaining to their public sphere of life, the originators of media content play a more crucial role in the democratic societies like India, where ideologies with regard to the issues of public concern will be shared and adopted. For women journalists to empower women in society, they have to be in a position to influence news content. So the status of women journalists has to be studied before one thinks of expecting them to contribute to equality. Are these women journalists empowered professionally and placed on par with male colleagues at newsrooms and in discharging their duties to promote equality? The question is the premise of the present study.

## RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The active and effective participation of women in news production has the power to challenge the existing stereotypical representation of women in news content. For that to happen, the news content creators have to be provided with a gender balanced work environment, where they are not discriminated against their male colleagues, based on gender. This study is aimed at examining various gender issues confronted by women journalists from recruitment to career advancement, at newsrooms in the study area – Tamil Nadu.

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