

Journalism as a Gendered Profession in Indonesia*

Deborah N. Simorangkir
Swiss German University, Indonesia

Abstract

This research aims to analyze how gendering operates in Indonesia's journalism industry by observing: 1) the obstacles that women journalists encounter in advancing their careers in comparison to men journalists; 2) the ways women journalists negotiate their professional role with their socially-constructed gender roles. In-depth interviews with 15 Indonesian women journalists are conducted and data are analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. Findings show that women journalists often feel the need to join the boys' club by adopting agentic traits traditionally deemed masculine in order to survive in their profession. However, when adopting such agentic traits as assertiveness and outspokenness, they are often criticized and even denied promotion. Women journalists often negotiate their professional roles and gender roles by not pursuing managerial positions because such positions can make it too difficult to juggle managerial and domestic duties. The results also indicate that family dynamics, organizational policies, and culture at large in Indonesia represent obstacles for women journalists' advancement in their careers.

Key words

Indonesia, women journalists, glass ceiling, role congruity

Introduction

Background

In the field of journalism, women continue to be regarded as 'other' compared to their male counterparts, and although—in theory—the gender of the journalist

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is proclaimed to be irrelevant, the female journalist often faces a dilemma: How to be masculine enough to attain success in journalism—projecting traits of aggressiveness, self-reliance, curiosity, toughness, ambition, cynicism—yet adhere to the socially-constructed gender role by showing traits of compassion, care, nurture, and sympathy (Saltzman, 2003). This is because maleness is regarded as neutral, thus male journalists are rendered professionals. On the other hand, women journalists are gendered, which means that the work they do is regularly scrutinized based on their femininity (Miller & Miller, 1995). Consequently, women are still concentrated in areas regarded as ‘soft’ news that emphasize ‘human interest’ stories, features and magazine-style journalism.

In television, importance is placed on the aspect of physical attractiveness and women journalists are often sexualized. In the past, male news anchors dominated the screen while female news anchors were not taken seriously. Nowadays there has been a significant rise in the number of female news anchors. However, viewers feel that it is important that these female news anchors be attractive. Viewers are more inclined to take male news anchors seriously, and thus judge them based on their competence, whereas female news anchors are often judged based on their looks (Nursalim, 2011). Compared to their male counterparts, women TV journalists are regularly scrutinized and judged based on their looks and their outfits, their hairdos and voices, much more often and rigorously by both management and audience. In addition, their personal lives are often dissected and debated in the news media (Chambers, Steiner, & Fleming, 2004). Women sports journalists, for instance, often feel they are “invisible to their colleagues, expected to know less and accept more menial assignments, while being the target of sexist language” (Miller & Miller, 1995, p. 883).

Research Problem

In the past two decades, women have been able to achieve decision-making positions. However, this does not necessarily translate to their empowerment within media structures, because they continue to be concentrated at the lower echelons of the profession, while men continue to dominate top management positions in the newspaper, radio, and television industries (Chambers et al., 2004).

Despite the increase in women’s labor force participation and educational attainment, gender disparities in other measures of labor force outcomes in Indonesia remain persistent. Even for the highly educated sub-group of

the urban population, a sizeable gender disparity in hourly wage, total wage, hours worked and occupational segregation continue to materialize (Utomo, 2004).

Even though the women who work in the media are encouraged by their education, regulations, lifestyle, culture, self-image, and societal outlook may discourage their empowerment (Dashti & Mesbah, 2016).

The 2016 country report on Journalists in Indonesia (Muchtar & Masduki, 2016) shows that there are approximately 42,000 working journalists. Journalists in Indonesia are typically male, in their mid-thirties, and hold university degrees in communications or journalism. The Indonesian term for journalist is *wartawan*, which literally means ‘news man.’ Compared to women journalists in other countries, Indonesian women’s participation in journalism is not only lower than in most Western countries, but is also in the low-to-middle range for Asia (Romano, 2013). Based on a 2012 research study conducted by the AJI (Alliance of Independent Journalists) (AJI, 2012), of a total of 14,000 journalists in Indonesia, only 10% were women. In 2019, this number was even smaller according to a survey by the PWI (Indonesian Journalists Association), showing that out of 15,000 journalists in Indonesia, approximately 5% were women. Even though women can now negotiate non-hierarchical management models that better suit journalistic work needs, including more flexible working hours and childcare support to counter the traditionally long hours associated with journalism, there is still no proof of female managers causing an acceleration in the promotion of women in the junior ranks (Romano, 2013). Moreover, while the rise of online journalism could have an effect on the gendered structures and stereotypes through interactive technology, it could also further reinforce a commercialization and ‘sexualization’ of journalism.

Literature Review

Gender in Indonesia’s Journalism Industry

In 2019, women journalists made up only approximately five percent of all journalists in Indonesia. Consequently, this often gives women little bargaining power in the workplace. In a news organization, most women journalists are placed in the lower level of the organizational structure, where they work as field journalists, and few rarely make their way up to the editorial level. Those who do face the chal-

lenges of working in a male-dominated environment, which include unfair and sexist beat distributions, as they are likely to be assigned to cover topics that are identified as womanly, or issues that fall under the category of ‘soft’ news (Sutarso, 2012). However, Ibrahim (2001, p. 108) suggests that the media policies cannot be entirely blamed for this situation because the media only reflect the preexisting societal perceptions toward women. This constructed reality is the reason why there is no further improvement in the representation of and societal behavior toward women.

In 2012, Indonesia’s Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI) compiled several findings regarding the treatment of women journalists in several Indonesian cities:

1. In 2012, AJI had 1,868 members, but only 18.6% were female ($n=347$).
2. A wage gap exists between female and male journalists. Male journalists who are considered breadwinners often receive a higher salary compared to their female counterparts. Moreover, female employees often do not receive health benefits because their employers presume that the husbands’ benefits cover their health insurance.
3. Uncertain working hours and difficulties juggling childcare and work make it difficult for women journalists with children to advance in their careers. Meanwhile, these journalists are usually evaluated by their supervisors based on the amount of time and effort they put into their work.
4. Media companies often do not provide nursing rooms for working mothers.
5. Women journalists generally still experience gender-motivated harassment. Many believe that they were hired to serve as bait for male sources. Hence, many claim to have been recruited based on their looks. This practice is commonly found in the television industry.
6. Women journalists often experience sexual harassment on the job, especially from male sources. A survey of 189 journalists showed that 14% have experienced sexual harassment.

These scenarios are examples of inequality and discrimination that women journalists in Indonesia often face within their profession (AJI, 2012, pp. 18–19).

These discrepancies are also found in journalists’ employment status. Based on the AJI’s survey of employees of Indonesia’s government radio station, women are more likely to be classified as contractors instead of permanent employees, which limits their career paths. Similar discrepancies are found in the managerial position; of 900 managerial positions, women fill only around 300, and these are mostly

administrative (Stellarosa & Silaban, 2019).

Sexual harassment in the workplace also remains a problem, with women journalists sometimes being harassed by their sources, including police officers (Luviana, 2012). On the other hand, many companies still lack specific policies and channels for complaints about intimidation and sexual harassment. Consequently, such complaints are usually directed to the supervisors, and this becomes difficult when the perpetrators of harassment or intimidation are the supervisors themselves (Stellarosa & Silaban, 2019). In reality, cases of violence or harassment against women journalists can be reported to the Press Council, which oversees the journalism profession. Press Council Regulation number 05 / Regulation-DP / IV / 2008 is designed to protect journalists in Indonesia, and one of the regulations states that in carrying out journalism duties, journalists are protected from acts of violence, from the taking, confiscation, or seizure of work tools, and must not be obstructed or intimidated by any party (Komala, 2018). Nevertheless, women's rights issues such as protection against sexual harassment in the workplace are still largely ignored, and the labor unions still cannot appropriately handle these issues that women journalists face (Stellarosa & Silaban, 2019).

As a consequence, in a male-dominated profession, a female journalist has to work harder to prove herself. In the journalism field, women are seen as valuable if they are on the cover of a magazine or as a scandalous news subject rather than a source for opinions. However, gender inequality in the media is a reflection of the sociocultural conditions of Indonesia's society. Issues regarding gender in journalism are much more complex, and do not only concern the media as an institution, but also society as a whole (Suhara, 2016).

Indeed, societal pressure is a factor that contributes to the low number of women journalists in the media. Because journalism is often regarded as a masculine occupation, men are more likely to apply for a job in the media compared to women, which arguably affects the number of competent women journalists sitting in positions of influence. Instead of being identified by their feminine persona, female leaders prefer to be associated with their professional traits. They distance themselves from some characteristics that might be seen as desirable by their male colleagues. Women in top positions have to choose between being an assertive leader or an object of desire. In order to be taken seriously, apparently, they cannot be both. The female editor is often portrayed as a very stern mother figure (Rahmawati & Riyanto, 2016).

The Glass Ceiling theory posits that top-level management in businesses is dominated by a certain demographic. Therefore, the experiences of the respondents

will be compared with studies in the literature that say that discrimination prevents women from reaching managerial levels. Moreover, it is important to learn whether women journalists encounter gender-based obstacles in carrying out managerial roles. Therefore, the theory of Role Congruity also frames this study.

Glass Ceiling Theory

Women and men are undoubtedly different physiologically. However, this fact is often used to legitimize the unequal treatment of women in various areas of life, as if the physiological differences would automatically become an obstacle to women's career choices, intelligence, credibility, and competence.

The term 'glass ceiling' is used to describe the phenomenon in which the top managerial levels in businesses are almost always dominated by a particular demographic group—regardless of education or experience levels. A ceiling symbolizes the limit as to how far people outside that particular demographic can advance within the organizational hierarchy; the ceiling is made of glass (transparent), symbolizing that the limit is not immediately visible from afar (the lower ranks). In particular, the glass ceiling most usually describes women's access—or the lack thereof—to the higher levels of management. The use of this term is sometimes extended to other minority groups, e.g. racial or ethnic, but it is most commonly linked to gender (Cotter, Hermsen, Ovadia, & Vanneman, 2001).

In Indonesia's strong patriarchal tradition, the young and modern "live at cultural crossroads between 'going global' and respecting local traditions and values" (Sarwono, 2012, p. 56). Even though globalization and the Internet have exposed them to other cultures and lifestyles, the majority of Indonesian women still adhere to the traditional idea that a wife must *nrima*, or yield, to her husband. Within the traditions of Java—home to more than half of the Indonesian population—a proverb describes the role and position of women: *Swarga nunut, neraka katut*, which means that a woman "will be happy if her husband is happy (as if living in *swarga* or heaven), but if her husband suffers (like living in *neraka* or hell), she will suffer as well" (Sarwono, 2012, p. 56). Therefore, women are expected to sacrifice themselves and remain dependent on their husbands. In times of economic hardship, daughters are often the first ones taken out of school by their parents because they are expected to take on their mothers' domestic duties when these mothers must work outside the house (Simorangkir, 2011). This patriarchal system is present in both the private and public arenas, including the workplace. Men are regarded as breadwinners, and therefore, in most organizations, are paid a higher

salary. Up until the 90s, male federal employees received rice allowances. Today, it is still common practice for employers to not give health insurance to married female employees because they are expected to already be covered by their husbands' health insurance. If she wanted to receive health benefits, a married female employee would have to show evidence that she does not receive health benefits from her husband's employment. Not surprisingly, men are considered more suitable to lead, and hence are more often placed in managerial positions.

Role Congruity Theory

Role congruity theory offers three main propositions. First, the attributes pertaining to the sexes are categorized into 'agentic' and 'communal':

Communal characteristics, which are ascribed more strongly to women, describe primarily a concern with the welfare of other people — for example, affectionate, helpful, kind, sympathetic, interpersonally sensitive, nurturing, and gentle. In contrast, agentic characteristics, which are ascribed more strongly to men, describe primarily an assertive, controlling, and confident tendency — for example, aggressive, ambitious, dominant, forceful, independent, self-sufficient, self-confident, and prone to act as a leader (Eagly & Karau, 2002, p. 574).

Second, people (leaders) who want to effectively gain compliance, must behave in accordance with their gender roles. Consequently, women would more successfully gain compliance using communal rather than agentic strategies. Third, when a woman deviates from her expected gender role, and uses agentic strategies in her leadership, she is likely to experience negative reactions and noncompliance. Therefore, “women in managerial positions can avoid negative reactions associated with taking a masculine-oriented role by combining the assertive, confident, and decisive behaviors required in this role with a more communal or feminine style” (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Therefore, women find it more difficult to exert influence than do men, especially when it requires the use of competence and authority — agentic traits. As a result, women are less influential when the strategy of communication or influence used is considered dominant (Carli, 2001).

Women journalists, as well as all other female workers in Indonesia, seem to understand that by having a profession, they are somewhat going against the patriarchal discourse of *kodrat wanita* (women's destiny). According to Nilan and Utari

(2008, p. 152), such workers understand that they are indeed doing a man's job, and in order to succeed in doing so, they would need to "become more like men." Still, they face "paternalistic and discriminatory treatment from bosses and managers," as well as disapproval from their families and society in general. "Certainly, the moral discourse of femininity comes down particularly harshly on married women with children who continue in a 'masculine' work lifestyle such as journalism." How they deal with the inflicted "self-doubt" and "moral guilt" determines whether they "stay in the job, seek promotion, or resign" (Nilan & Utari, 2008, p. 152).

The seemingly shrinking percentage of women journalists and their stereotyped roles pose questions about how female journalists got into this situation and how they negotiate this status. Therefore, based on the gendered structure of the managerial and operational aspects of journalism in Indonesia, the study tries to answer the following research questions:

1. What obstacles do women journalists encounter in advancing their career in comparison to men journalists?
2. How do women journalists negotiate their professional role with their socially-constructed gender roles?

Method

This study applies a phenomenological qualitative method, using in-depth interviews with a non-probability purposive snowball sample of 15 women journalists from September to December, 2018. All but three interviews were conducted face-to-face, the other three choosing to be interviewed online. All face-to-face interviews were conducted in the capital city of Jakarta, with an average duration of one hour. The interviews were mostly conducted in a mix of English and Indonesian. Transcripts were later translated into English, and proofread by native English speakers.

The following are the profiles of the respondents, including the type of media where they currently work, their current position, and number of years as a journalist:

1. A: TV; Producer of News & Current Affairs division; 13 years
2. B: TV; Reporter; 1 year
3. C: TV; Newscaster; 10 years
4. D: TV; News Producer; 9 years

5. E: Print newspaper; Editor; 15 years
6. F: Online news portal; Senior Editor; 13 years
7. G: TV; Editor; 10 years
8. H: TV; Producer; 13 years
9. I: TV; News Producer; 11 years
10. J: Online newspaper; Assistant Editor; 11 years
11. K: Radio; Program Producer; 1 year
12. L: Radio; Announcer and Media Relations; 6 years
13. M: Radio; Music Director and Producer; 22 years
14. N: TV; News Anchor and Program Host; 5 years
15. O: Print newspaper; Editor; 15 years

The interview transcriptions were then subjected to content and interpretative phenomenological analyses based on the study's research questions. The main themes analyzed included: views on the perception of journalism as a gendered profession, views on how the journalism careers of women compare to those of men, and personal experiences negotiating their professional roles and gender roles. Direct quotes from participants were then cataloged under the main themes, and evidence of career obstacles, gender discrimination and harassment, and discrepancies between male and women journalists were finally analyzed using the Glass Ceiling and Role Congruency theories. Even though the aim of phenomenology is not to verify a theory, it is, however, necessary to have a theoretical framework. Still, as interpretative research, this study assumes social reality as being embedded within its social setting, from which it cannot be separated, and that reality is therefore interpreted through a sense-making process rather than a hypothesis-testing process (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Therefore, this research study does not attempt to prove or reject a hypothesis. Instead, it aims to make sense of the reality of the gendering of the journalism profession as experienced by Indonesia's women journalists.

Findings and Discussion

Women in a Male-dominated Profession

The respondents in this study claim to have been initially attracted to the field of journalism because of the variety of experiences the field offers and the impact that a journalist has on society:

Being a journalist gives me the chance to meet great people, different people almost every day. I enjoy gaining unique stories from different people. It also takes me to many different places and communities of different cultures. Being a journalist gives me a key to explore the world (A).

I think it's an honor to be at the "start" of communication, to be able to share and write news and stories with audiences; To be useful to society by giving information. I also like the challenges; no days are the same. Every day is different, stressful, but somehow fun (B).

However, they feel that upon becoming journalists, the development of their careers has been mostly mediocre. When asked what they believe to be the factors hindering their career development, one respondent's elaborate answer summed up almost all the other answers:

First are the company's ever-changing policies. When I was working for a magazine, I had to start as an intern, then I could become a member of the editorial staff — not the head editor. And each position took a long time. Meanwhile, after I got promoted, they changed the policies, and the internship requirement was only once and a maximum of two years, whereas I had to do it for several years. So, one of the reasons why I left was because after 10 years, I was still on the editorial staff, while there was another person who had only been there for three years, and was already at the same level as I was [...] When I was finally promoted, I had to take maternity leave, but then when I came back, everybody's position had already changed, so I had to get acquainted with the new people. I needed a long time to catch up, and I was exhausted, so I asked to be reassigned to another division, and they put me in the Arts division (G).

On the other hand, when asked to identify the factors that have supported their career development, their answers include networking and social skills; family support; love of the job and sense of self-achievement; and work experience.

With the difficulties the respondents are encountering when trying to advance their careers, coupled with their passion for journalism, it is not surprising that only one respondent is considering pursuing a top management position:

[...] Honestly, I can't be a journalist and only stay in the office. There are producers who, on a daily basis, just stay in the office and take care of the bulletin, while the journalists roam about outside the office. I can't be like that. Luckily, for my program, there are times that I get to do field work and other times that I have to stay in the office, so I don't get bored [...] I can still expand my network and socialize (D).

Meanwhile, others hope to simply expand their expertise:

Because I've been a TV host for such a long time, I would like to have my own talk show and to teach [...] When you've had so much experience, there are many people who want to learn from us (C).

Such findings are in line with those of Dashti and Mesbah, that while female media professionals in Kuwait “feel empowered by education, the regulations, and the current lifestyle in Kuwait, their cultural upbringing, self-image, and societal outlook discourage their empowerment” (2016, p. 276).

All respondents agree that the success of a journalist is not measured by his/her position, but by the impact he/she makes on society through his/her journalism:

Successful journalists are those who are able to influence society (E).

I'm successful if my work can give enlightenment to my reader or make social changes (J).

Journalism as a Masculine Profession

Traditionally, journalism is regarded as a masculine profession, and all respondents agree with this historical assumption. However, they have also observed a paradigm shift:

Nowadays we are equal [...] Women are now hosting adventure TV shows and go to remote areas [...] They are now doing things that are considered outside the norm, for example, male chefs are now preferred over females, and for travel shows, female hosts are preferred over male hosts [...] I consider this an opportunity for us, because women can now get certain positions that were traditionally for men, or the other way

around, but now the standards have become distorted (C).

When asked whether they think that gender determines a journalist's ability to carry out certain journalism tasks, their responses are equally split. Those who say 'yes' claim that there are certain tasks that are more suitable for a certain gender:

Being a female journalist is sometimes more advantageous when carrying out certain duties, for instance, when dealing with male-dominated institutions such as the military or police department, which are usually more welcoming to women journalists than male journalists (A).

It has a lot to do with the safety of the journalists. Editors must decide which journalists cover which stories, and always try to assign women journalists to go to places that are safer and free from conflicts, for instance, the city hall, whereas the male journalists can be sent to the police station, or KPK (Corruption Eradication Commission). When the female journalist is married, this can be especially problematic when the husband does not agree with the wife's assignment [...] But I know that in some media, the management does not care about this issue (M).

Furthermore, all respondents, except for two, do not believe that gender determines the role (e.g., field reporter, news anchor, news writer, researcher, management) of a journalist within a media company. It seems as though the distinctions mainly happen in broadcast media, where appearance and voice are very important:

It definitely determines your role, particularly if you're a news anchor [...] Even though there are many good male news anchors, the famous ones are usually female, because we're more visually attractive (G).

In Indonesia they still determine the roles that are more suitable for women and the ones that are suitable for men. For instance, radio newscasting runs every hour, from morning to evening [...] but to balance things out, when the morning hosts are both male, then the newscaster would be female, just to sweeten things up (K).

However, most respondents feel that they are getting paid the same amount as

their male counterparts but acknowledge that this is not the case in all media companies. In Indonesia, salary is confidential and it is considered unethical to discuss this with others. The same goes for their chance of getting a raise:

I don't know for sure, because after I resigned from [previous media company], I realized that other media are very strict about salary confidentiality. But in my previous office, maybe because I've been there for a long time, my close friends and I would tell each other our salaries, and I could see that those on the same level were paid the same amount. But I also have a friend in the same company who feels that the careers of married men are usually better, because the company would prioritize them since they are considered the backbones of their families, and thus their salaries are higher (F).

For TV news anchors, however, the pay is said to be higher for women:

Yes, news anchors are mostly female, because media companies think the audience prefers them (J).

When it comes to promotion, most respondents claim that male and female journalists have the same opportunity to be promoted. However, two disagree:

Just count how many female editors-in-chief there are [...] Very few! It's a very masculine industry, especially for women, you may have to give favors, especially sexual favors. When I was covering the Jakarta Police Department, there was a rumor about a TV station reporter, a private TV station, who got information by sleeping around with the officers [...] That's when I realized I was lucky that what I experienced at [current company] was only office politics, which prevented me from being promoted [...] Men may not have to give sexual favors to their boss, but women most likely have to [...] At [a different media group], I even heard this did not only happen to women, but to men too (E).

It is easier for men to advance. Especially with the company's ever-changing policies. But when I complain, then I'm considered whiney. I don't like to have to whine about things that I shouldn't

have to ask for. But the fact is, I finally got promoted only after I questioned why I hadn't been promoted in eight years (G).

Indeed, when it comes to company policies, all agree that their companies have plenty of room for improvement, and should put into effect certain policies that would accommodate women journalists:

When it comes to health insurance, husbands of female employees are not covered, unlike male employees and their wives (H).

Generally, yes, my company has rules that are friendly to women journalists in terms of maternity leave and flexible time during pregnancy, but there are some other needs that are not yet fulfilled by the company, for example, we don't have a nursing room. A woman who needs to do breast-pumping has to cover herself with a nursing cover at her desk [...] Our company has also not given adequate aid for employees during pregnancy and childbirth, which is very important (A).

A big problem commonly found in gendered professions is sexual harassment. The majority of respondents of this study have either experienced, or know a colleague who has experienced, sexual harassment, which ranges from inappropriate jokes to more serious violations:

A lot of male coworkers do dirty talk. You can choose to shake it off or complain about it. I choose to shake it off. But that stuff does not only apply to the journalism field; I think it's in our culture [...] We women get a lot of catcalls from other people on the field. It's sickening (B).

[Unwelcome] approaches from sources almost always happen [...] some would meet me for an interview, and immediately hand me cash and ask me to meet them in their hotel room [...] At the end, this goes back to what type of person you want to be. Especially in my career as a sportscaster and presenter, I could be replaced any day. But do I want to be known as someone who could be "booked" by anyone, or do I want to be known for my accomplishments? (C).

As a newscaster, especially when I was doing sports, I was told to wear skimpy dresses, and I was like, Whoa! I felt uncomfortable, but at the moment I was hesitant to say anything. I didn't want to wear such a short skirt. I wanted my skirt to be at knee-length, I was used to wearing a blazer. But eventually I learned to speak up and explain that if I don't feel comfortable, I couldn't do my job well. I'm not like other sportscasters. I have my own rules, and if you want to work with me, we'll have to find a middle ground (C).

Some respondents think that sexual harassment is embedded in the job, hence women journalists should learn to simply ignore it:

I'm now used to it, so I take it as a joke. For example, if someone whistles at me or catcalls, I just ignore it (K).

In spite of this situation, all respondents claim that, theoretically, female and male journalists have the same chance to pursue a top management position, yet in reality, few of them actually aim to pursue such positions:

Same chances, but I don't know why, many female senior journalists opt to seek a different career path in a different field (F).

With the small number of women journalists in top management positions, five respondents claimed to prefer a male manager over a female manager:

In my opinion, female bosses are meaner than male bosses to their female subordinates. I have read about that and have experienced it myself, including when I was assigned to investigate a prison inmate, at the time I had a female boss. I was never given such weird assignments by male bosses (G).

Whereas one respondent said she preferred a female manager:

I prefer a female manager because she will better understand my needs (J).

Meanwhile, the rest claim to have no preference:

No, I don't have any preference, I think it's the same as long as they are competent in their job (A).

However, despite their preferences, all respondents agreed that women are suitable for top management positions. However, only three claimed to aspire to someday reach top management level in their career:

I don't really care about the management things [...] Because I'm a presenter. So, if you want to get an honest personal answer, that's not really my goal (C).

No, because the working hours are crazy, so if I have a family, I might decide to change my career (B).

A managerial position is much more hectic, and you have to manage people's work. Once I get married, I don't think I'll have the time to handle that (A).

It should be noted that the respondents do not say that the managerial tasks in themselves would be too hard. Instead, having to juggle managerial duties and domestic duties is the hard part. Though most claim that women today have the same opportunities as men, they still cite family and childrearing as a reason not to pursue top management. Therefore, it seems that in negotiating between the professional role and the gender role, these respondents choose to not pursue managerial positions.

Meanwhile, when being asked what they think are the most important qualities that a female journalist must possess in order to reach top management level, each respondent gives different qualities. The followings are the most important: flexibility, time management, lobbying skills, having a supportive family, objectivity, being hardworking, assertiveness, intelligence, social skills, integrity, and professionalism.

Company policies should differentiate between men and women, because the fact is, men are only breadwinners, while all domestic duties are given to the wife [...] Unless men also take part in the domestic duties, and breastfeeding could also be done by men, policies should be different (G).

In the end, based on their experience as journalists, the respondents are asked what advice they would give to young women who aspire to become journalists. Some of their answers include:

Take advantage of the two years before getting married, as a foundation, so that once you're married, your position will not be too low, and your income will already be at a safe level, so it will just have to keep increasing. But these two first years must be crazy. Aside from that, you must have high self-confidence. So, skills and high self-confidence (G).

Don't get emotional [...] Prove that you're capable, and believe that you are capable (M).

First and foremost, you must be passionate about journalism and not only want to appear on screen, because journalists do not always appear on the screen. The right mentality is also important, because we deal with various types of people [...] Some are good, some are grouchy, some keep cancelling out on interviews even though your deadline is approaching, which can put us down, but you must have a good mental and physical condition (D).

Keep learning about ethics and professionalism in mass media. Don't hesitate to intern and learn at a media company from the start (I).

Factors Contributing to the Glass Ceiling in Indonesia's Journalism Industry

The responses from the in-depth interviews show not only that there is indeed a glass ceiling in Indonesia's journalism industry, but also that some women journalists even agree that there should be differentiation between women and men journalists, because the managerial position is deemed too difficult for women to juggle with domestic duties. Though most respondents initially deny it, throughout their interviews, most give examples from personal experiences, or those of others, that indicate the existence of such a glass ceiling. This denial is, in fact, one common theme found in the interviews, and is likely to be in itself one of the factors that contribute to the glass ceiling.

However, the main culprit contributing to the glass ceiling in Indonesia's journalism industry is its patriarchal system, which is seldom questioned, let alone, challenged, by either women or men. The concept of patriarchy usually refers to the expectation that men take primary responsibility for the welfare of the community as a whole, beginning with their families up to holding public office. Some respondents agreed that women deliberately accept these limitations as their destiny (*kodrat*), and yield to the idea that their place is only at home, tending the family.

The theme of women undermining other women in the workplace has also come up during the interviews. Some respondents, albeit a minority, say that female bosses are particularly less supportive of their female subordinates. This is interesting because it appears as though the resentment of female managers is not being directed at the organizational structure or culture but instead at other women. On some occasions, respondents also criticize other women journalists they deem professionally inferior for not upholding the standards that the respondents claim to uphold. For instance, the sports journalist criticizing fellow sports journalists for agreeing to dress provocatively, and also the editorial manager who mentions another female journalist who gets promoted *possibly* because of sexual favors. In other words, the glass ceiling may also be, in part, caused by other (unsupportive) women journalists.

Corporate culture and policies are also mentioned by the respondents, and thus are considered as factors contributing to the glass ceiling. The phenomenon of men feeling threatened by women's outspokenness and assertiveness was referred to by respondent F, who said that her assertive and outspoken manner has led her to be considered insubordinate and not a good team player, whereas her male colleague with whom she was competing is (she feels) far more outspoken is considered a good leader. According to Grunig, Hon, and Toth (2013), young women are often recruited because they are regarded as less expensive to hire, more flexible (before getting married), and less ambitious than their male counterparts, but these same attributes could later prevent them from advancing to managerial roles. This corporate culture is also considered a factor contributing to the glass ceiling.

As mentioned previously, a distinction exists between the roles and duties of men and women in Indonesia. This distinction is also commonly found in the workplace. Some respondents even consider such work distinctions as necessary. Moreover, some respondents have revealed that men tend to be regarded as more dignified and powerful, and thus are given assignments that are more 'serious,'

such as politics and conflicts, whereas women are regarded to be more suitable for softer news, so when women are assigned a ‘serious’ topic, it is in the hope that they will be able to tempt more sources into giving information via their looks or femininity. Logically, the assumption that male journalists are more dignified and powerful grants them an easier path in career advancement. Therefore, the distinction of roles and duties between men and women journalists is also considered a factor contributing to the glass ceiling.

Lastly, most respondents revealed having experienced sexual harassment on the job, or knowing other women journalists who have experienced it. If the number of women journalists increases, it is hoped that women would also increasingly take managerial roles. The opportunity to work in an environment free from harassment may determine how influential they will be as top-level managers. Therefore, sexual harassment against women journalists is also considered a factor contributing to the glass ceiling.

Factors of Role Congruity in Journalism as a Profession

Comparing male and female managers, the majority of respondents in this study claimed to have no preference, stating that it all depends on the competence of the leaders and that the distinctions are only in the leadership approach. They also consider both male and female managers to be equally capable. However, there is evidence from those respondents who missed out on promotions that this was because of displaying traits that are too agentic. Referring to Role Congruity theory, female managers would have more difficulties in gaining compliance because they would be displaying traits that are not traditionally assigned to them. On the other hand, there is a lingering stereotype, called “*think manager-think male*” that links managerial activities with male qualities (Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell, & Ristikari, 2011). This means that the traits attributed to masculinity are regarded as essential to be successful as managers; consequently, women in managerial positions imitate stereotypically male behavior in order to achieve success (Cuadrado, 2004). Yet, by doing this, women are regarded as contradicting the expected feminine traits, and are evaluated negatively (Eagly & Karau, 2002). This makes it doubly difficult for women journalists who aspire to reach top management levels, because just being a journalist, let alone holding a top managerial position in journalism, is traditionally considered a masculine role.

This leads to what Chinchilla and León (2004) call a “concrete ceiling,” which is a process of self-exclusion by personal choice, such as rejecting promotion and

choosing ‘softer’ assignments. This self-exclusion is evident in the answers from this study’s respondents, who claim to not be interested in pursuing a managerial position because of how difficult it would be to juggle a professional role and a gender role as a woman. Some even say that they would resign once they get married:

Of course, I’ve thought about it [...] I don’t know if I could make it for too long in the media industry. We women have to be fair, we also work to survive, not just for our passion [...] I also have other roles other than as a journalist: As a mother, as a wife, as a daughter, and I want it all, but top management means dealing with other people, the level of stress is high, and there’s a lot of politics (G).

Conclusion

This research study has discussed how gendering operates within the journalism industry by analyzing the obstacles that women journalists encounter in advancing their career in comparison to men journalists, and the ways women journalists negotiate their professional role with their socially-constructed gender role.

In this study, the gendering of the journalism profession in Indonesia is analyzed through the Glass Ceiling theory and Role Congruity theory because the researcher feels that these are the two theories that are most relevant to the gender discrepancies in the journalism industry. Based on these two theories, the researcher explains the factors and aspects that pertain to Indonesia according to the interview results.

The factors that contribute to the existence of a glass ceiling in journalism in Indonesia are: denial, the patriarchal system, resentment among fellow women journalists, corporate culture, distinction of roles and duties between male and women journalists, and sexual harassment. The reality is, women often decide to not pursue managerial positions for many reasons, including: starting a family, taking care of children, juggling career and family, gender-based discrimination, lack of support from family and employers, and existing social norms. Identifying the factors that contribute to the glass ceiling in Indonesian journalism is essential in order to answer the research questions. Further research about gender roles could possibly shed more light on why men and women operate at certain levels within this profession.

From the perspective of Role Congruity theory, the highly agentic role of the

provider means that women who work are likely to face role incongruity between their (communal) female gender role—*kodrat wanita*—and their (agentic) provider role, including their profession. This role incongruity would also eventually impact how effective these women would be in gaining compliance from their subordinates, should they become managers. In this study, this theory helps to understand why respondents in this study face the obstacles that they face in their journalism careers. Carli (2001) explains that women find it harder to exert influence than men do, especially if the tactic used to exert influence suggests competence and authority, which are agentic traits.

On a practical level, the findings from this research study address the structural demands of organizations. For instance, there are still many travel demands in journalism that female journalists with children are less likely to be able to meet. Also, there is the prevailing assumption that if a woman takes maternity leave, she will not return to work. In addition, women continue to be primary care providers and housekeepers, in essence balancing two jobs. Therefore, this research seeks to go beyond proving that gender inequality exists, and instead explain and offer possible solutions to problems. It aims to eventually offer tools to both men and women journalists to overcome the barriers that prevent the advancement of women in journalism.

Despite the so-called egalitarian atmosphere and the openness of the journalism field, there are still women journalists who are mistreated professionally and experience sexual harassment. Inappropriate jokes about and physical contact with women are deemed acceptable behavior among colleagues, and women journalists often feel the need to convince themselves that such treatment is normal in order to survive in this profession.

In Indonesia, women who work have very limited time and space to fulfil their duties as wives and mothers, whereas men's duties as husbands and fathers already revolve around working and providing for the family, and thus juggling both work and domestic duties is not considered conflicting for men. To move up the ladder, women journalists have to adopt the values and traits associated with masculinity. This leads to guilt for not being able to fully assume their duties as wives and mothers, and thus women journalists who wish to keep working after marriage often negotiate between their professional roles and gender roles by not pursuing top managerial positions. It is not that women are less competent at being managers but that they find having to juggle managerial duties and domestic duties difficult, a difficulty Indonesian men rarely encounter. This difficulty that women journalists face is likely to remain if there is no change in the family system.

Husbands and wives should support and encourage each other to advance in their respective careers, while equally taking care of their families. There is also a need for changes in company policies and culture regarding women journalists attempting to break through the glass ceiling, as well as a need to encourage more women to want to advance in their careers.

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Biographical Note: **Deborah N. SIMORANGKIR** earned her Master of Science degree in Communication Management from Towson University (USA), and her Doctor of Philosophy degree in Media and Communication Sciences from Technische Universität Ilmenau (Germany). Her main research interests are in gender, culture, and public relations. She is currently Associate Professor, and Head of the Communication and Public Relations Study Program at Swiss German University (Indonesia). E-mail: deborah.simorangkir@sgu.ac.id