



# Journalism education in Bangladesh

From aspiring journalists to career professionals

Supported by the



Federal Ministry  
for Economic Cooperation  
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## Imprint

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Germany

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### PUBLISHED

October 2019

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Jude William Genilo, Fahmidul Haq, Shameem Mahmud

# Acknowledgements

First of all, we would like to express our sincere thanks to DW Akademie for this initiative. The importance of this study lies in its main research questions: What factors facilitate or inhibit aspiring Bangladeshi journalists to prepare for and join the profession and what factors enable or restrict them from acquiring the necessary skill sets (particularly in educational institutions and media outlets) to succeed in journalism. The insights gathered from this will aid both the industry and academia to help the profession of journalism progress to a new level.

A research study of this magnitude requires a lot of support from so many people. We would like to express our sincere thanks to the advisors from DW Akademie: Dr. Esther Dorn-Fellermann and Dr. Dennis Reineck (Project Managers, DW Akademie) as well as Priya Esselborn (Country Manager Bangladesh, DW Akademie) who gave us multitudes of good advice on the study's methodology.

Before this study was finalized, it was presented to the heads and faculty members of journalism departments in Bangladesh. We would like to thank them for the feedback they gave during the Networking Conference held on November 28, 2018 at the University of Chittagong. From this feedback, we were able to improve the study and address many of the concerns raised.

We would like to thank from the bottom of our hearts the aspiring journalists (students and new journalists), academics, and professionals interviewed in this study for their cooperation and support. Also, we would like to express our gratitude to people who contributed to this study in different capacities— Nandita Tabassum Khan (Senior Lecturer, ULAB), Mahmudunnabi (Senior Lecturer, ULAB), Riaz Uddin Khan (Adjunct Faculty, ULAB), Aminul Islam (Lecturer, Varendra University), Piyas Roy (Senior Media Lab Instructor, ULAB), Rex Martin Gomes (Admin Officer, ULAB), Al-Imran (Admin Officer, ULAB), and M. Khaled Kamal (Former Lecturer, Prime University).

Last but not least, thanks to our two research assistants Dr. Sarkar Barbaq Quarmal (Assistant Professor, ULAB) and Mohammad Shazzad Hossain (Assistant Professor, ULAB) for the commitment they have shown during this study.

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## List of abbreviations

<b>A Level</b>	Advanced Level	<b>JMS</b>	Journalism and Media Studies
<b>AV</b>	Audio-visual	<b>JRN</b>	Journalism for Electronic and Print Media
<b>BA</b>	Bachelor of Arts	<b>JU</b>	Jahangirnagar University
<b>BCDJC</b>	Bangladesh Centre for Development, Journalism and Communication	<b>JUN</b>	Jagannath University
<b>BDT</b>	Bangladeshi Taka	<b>KU</b>	Khulna University
<b>BIJEM</b>	Bangladesh Institute of Journalism and Electronic Media	<b>LAN</b>	Local Area Network
<b>BJM</b>	Bachelor of Journalism and Media Studies	<b>MCJ</b>	Mass Communication and Journalism
<b>BPJ</b>	Broadcast Print Journalism	<b>MIU</b>	Manarat International University
<b>BRUR</b>	Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur	<b>MOU/MoU</b>	Memorandum of understanding
<b>BSS</b>	Bachelor of Social Science	<b>MPhil</b>	Master of Philosophy
<b>BTRC</b>	Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission	<b>MSJ</b>	Media Studies and Journalism
<b>BTV</b>	Bangladesh Television	<b>MSS</b>	Master of Social Science
<b>BU</b>	University of Barisal	<b>NBIU</b>	North Bengal International University
<b>CAJ</b>	Communication and Journalism	<b>NIMC</b>	National Institute of Mass Communication
<b>C-JEN</b>	Communication and Journalism Educators' Network Bangladesh	<b>O Level</b>	Ordinary Level
<b>CJS</b>	Communication and Journalism Studies	<b>PCIU</b>	Port City International University
<b>CMS</b>	Communication and Media Studies	<b>PGDJ</b>	Post Graduate Diploma in Journalism
<b>CoU</b>	Comilla University	<b>PIB</b>	Press Institute Bangladesh
<b>CU</b>	University of Chittagong	<b>PPT</b>	PowerPoint presentation
<b>DFP</b>	Directorate of Film and Publications	<b>RTI</b>	Right to Information
<b>DIU</b>	Daffodil International University	<b>RU</b>	University of Rajshahi
<b>DSLR</b>	Digital single-lens reflex	<b>SSC</b>	Secondary School Certificate
<b>DU</b>	University of Dhaka	<b>Stamford</b>	Stamford University Bangladesh
<b>DW</b>	Deutsche Welle	<b>STEM</b>	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
<b>FM</b>	Frequency modulation	<b>TVRO</b>	Television receive only
<b>FT</b>	Full-time	<b>UGC</b>	University Grants Commission
<b>GED</b>	General educational development	<b>USD</b>	United States dollar
<b>HEQEP</b>	Higher education quality enhancement project	<b>ULAB</b>	University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh
<b>HSC</b>	Higher secondary certificate	<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>ICT</b>	Information and communication technology	<b>UODA</b>	University of Development Alternative
<b>IQAC</b>	Institutional quality assurance cell	<b>VU</b>	Varendra University
<b>IUB</b>	Independent University, Bangladesh	<b>WCC</b>	World Communicators' Council
<b>JCMS</b>	Journalism, Communication and Media Studies		
<b>JMC</b>	Journalism and Mass Communication		

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## Executive summary

What obstacles do Bangladeshis face when they want to become journalists? What enables or restricts them from acquiring the necessary skills to succeed in professional journalism? These were some of the central questions behind the study “Journalism Education in Bangladesh: From Aspiring Journalists to Career Professionals”.

The study examines the effects of DW Akademie’s efforts in Bangladesh since 2014. DW Akademie aims to better qualify journalism graduates and young journalists for their work in the media. The study identifies the needs of key actors (new and aspiring journalists, journalism education institutions, and media houses) in the context of these endeavors. It also aims to find out what contribution these players could make to DW Akademie’s long-term project and to improving the job market for journalists.

This study drew data using a mixed method research technique, which included survey questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The methodology was divided into three parts based on the three actors (aspiring and new journalists, educational institutions, and media outlets).

- 327 journalism students from different universities and training institutes took part in a survey.
- 12 educational institutions were analyzed (6 public universities, 3 private universities, 2 public journalism institutes (diploma and vocational), and 1 private journalism institute (vocational).
- 9 senior journalists and media managers were interviewed to explore recruitment criteria and the process of newsroom integration of newly employed journalists.

The research shows that these factors affect new and aspiring journalists as they enter and go through journalism schools:

- **Income group.** Aspiring journalists who come from low-income groups may fulfill their ambition by entering public universities. However, seats are limited and the fight for these seats is highly competitive. Those who cannot make it to public universities may opt to study in private universities. However, the tuition fees are rather expensive.
- **Family support.** Journalism is not among the courses supported by parents and guardians. More often than not, aspiring journalists are persuaded to take some other degrees such as Business Studies, English, Engineering and Medicine. Among university respondents, 67.89 percent have the support of their families. However, only 38.84 percent are given financial support.
- **Gender bias.** Males far outweigh females in journalism programs. Four-fifths of university respondents believed that women face greater obstacles than men in pursuing a journalism career in the country.

These factors affect new and aspiring journalists as they enter the job market:

- **Lack of personal connections.** Towards and/or after graduation, aspiring journalists need to take written examinations, create portfolio reviews, and hold panel interviews in order to enter the top media companies. Smaller to medium-sized media companies, on the other hand, rely more on personal connections rather than formal recruitment procedures. Aspiring journalists without the proper connections are at a disadvantage in this regard.
- **Lack of skill set.** The top media companies recruit 50 percent of their new employees from graduates with journalism backgrounds. They expect these graduates to have traditional, as well as new and specialized journalism skills. Those who do not possess such skills are not recruited by them.
- **Change of career track.** During university studies, half of the aspiring journalists move into other fields such as public relations and public service.

These factors affect new and aspiring journalists once they are working in the media:

- **Low salary/incentives.** Aspiring journalists did not get into the profession for financial reasons. However, they still need to earn enough to lead a decent life. They expect to be paid commensurate to a professional given that they have a university degree. Only the top media companies pay good salaries and give adequate incentives. Most small to medium-sized media houses do not follow the regulations of the wage board.
- **Job insecurity.** There are no standard career tracks or regulated promotions for new journalists. Without a codified human resource policy, careers often depend on the mercy of the editor.
- **Family pressure.** The families of female journalists often expect them to balance office and home. Since this is difficult, many women are pressured to give up journalism.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Study background and research questions

DW Akademie runs a project called “Media development in Bangladesh: Support for journalism education at Bangladeshi universities.” The project aims to improve the qualifications of graduates and young professionals entering the job market. This should ultimately help the population of Bangladesh to receive more diverse and balanced information and enable the people to participate in and strengthen public dialogue. DW Akademie’s main objectives in Bangladesh are to modernize journalism education at the country’s two largest regional universities, partner universities Rajshahi and Chittagong, and to better connect them to the media industry. The goal is to adapt lessons learned and best practices for a reform of the journalism education in the whole country.

Through reflection on the general structure and approaches of journalism education in Bangladesh, the main objective of this research is to analyze the educational pathways and challenges to newsroom integration of the aspiring and young journalists. The research is focused on the major actors in journalism education and practices—the educators, media professionals, and the aspiring journalists. This research formulates these main research questions:

1. What are the factors that facilitate or inhibit new and aspiring Bangladeshi journalists to prepare for and join the profession?
2. What are the factors that would enable or restrict new and aspiring journalists from acquiring the necessary skill sets (particularly in educational institutions and media outlets) to succeed in the profession?

Assuming that a considerable number of journalism students do not end up in the media houses as journalists, this study aims to find out when and why the aspiring journalism students decide against this profession. On the other hand, the study aims to draw conclusions about possible improvements in journalism education from the motivating factors for exercising the journalism profession.

## 1.2 Review of literature

### The growth of journalism education

Throughout the world, journalism education is a growing field of academic training. This has led researchers to investigate how these journalism programs are structured, which approaches educators take to train future journalists, and how journalism education is accommodating new communication technologies in a globalizing world (Gaunt, 1992; Frohlich & Holtz-Bacha, 2003; de Burgh, 2005; Deuze, 2006; Zelizer, 2004; Josephi, 2009).

Research on journalism education is burgeoning and therefore it is possible to explain the growth, transformations, and major approaches to teaching journalism in a better way. Journalism was once regarded as a profession where skills are learned on the job. In recent years, however, there has been a clear trend towards standardization of journalism education at universities in many Western countries. A similar trend is visible in non-western countries (Obijiofor & Hanusch, 2011; Weaver, 1998; Hanitzsch et al., 2011).

Despite or maybe because of this trend towards standardization, journalism education is one of the most hotly debated issues in academia. One key finding of the emerging research on journalism education is that pedagogical methods and approaches are highly diverse (Josephi, 2009). Scholars and professionals heatedly debate what journalists should be taught as well as how they should be taught (Josephi, 2009). Comparing journalism education of different European countries, Nordenstreng (2009) argues that models of journalism education do not fall into the types of media systems as proposed by Hallin and Mancini (2004). Based on media-politics interrelation, Hallin and Mancini (2004) categorized the western media systems into three models—the Liberal Model, the Democratic Corporatist Model and the Polarized Pluralist Model. However, there remains a considerable heterogeneity in terms of the actual educational models of journalism and “the situation of journalism education seems to be quite specific to each country” (Nordenstreng, 2009, p. 513). One form doesn’t fit all. This makes a classification of the models of journalism education difficult. Deuze (2005, 2006) attempted to deal with this complexity. Based on the works of Gaunt (1992) and Frohlich and Holtz-Bacha (2003), he classified journalism education across the world into five major types: (i) training at university level/tertiary level education; (ii) mixed system of stand-alone and university-level training; (iii) stand-alone journalism schools; (iv) on-the-job training by the media industry; and (v) mixed forms and other models. Deuze (2006, p. 20) predicts “most if not all systems of journalism education are moving toward the first or second model, indicating increasing levels of professionalization, formalization, and standardization worldwide.”

Taking this complexity of approaches to journalism education into consideration, this research explores the relationship between journalism education and journalistic practices in Bangladesh. It has two main goals: first, to examine how journalism education is structured in Bangladesh; and second, how aspiring/young journalists are being integrated into the newsroom here.

## Journalism education: an agent of professionalizing journalism practices

The increased amount of research into journalism education has one general flaw: it focusses mostly on cases in developed countries. Scientists largely ignore how journalism education is structured in developing and least developed countries. The research can explain trends of journalism education in elective democracies, but the situation in many authoritarian and post-authoritarian countries is largely unexplored.

This, however, has been noticed and now there is an increasing demand in academia to understand the scope, status, and development of journalism education in non-Western countries (Josephi 2010; Schmidt, 2015, p. 13). The underlying assumption is that journalism education leads to more professional journalists and that these, in turn, will help form an informed and deliberative society (Josephi, 2009; Curran, 2005, p. xiv, cited in Josephi, 2010).

This notion is also recognized in the UNESCO's (2007) model curricula for journalism education for developing countries and emerging democracies. The expectation is that after completion of journalism education, the graduate will help "to serve society by informing the public, scrutinizing the way power is exercised, stimulating democratic debate, and in those ways aiding political, economic, social and cultural development" (UNESCO, 2007). Obijiofor and Hanusch (2011, pp. 80–81) made a similar argument. Reese and Cohen (2000, p. 217) described the elements of professional journalism as "a body of knowledge," "a public service ideal," "an ethical framework," and "a core set of skills" (Reese and Cohen, 2000, p. 217).

Deuze (2005, p. 444) follows a similar line. He analyzes the literature on journalism studies and then defines journalism as

“ The 20th-century history of (the professionalization of) journalism can be typified by the consolidation of a consensual occupational ideology among journalists in different parts of the world. Conceptualizing journalism as an ideology (rather than, for example, other options offered in the literature such as a profession, an industry, a literary genre, a culture or a complex social system) primarily means understanding journalism in terms of how journalists give meaning to their newswork.

We can find similar argument in Hallin and Mancini's (2004) work when they describe autonomy, distinct professional norms, and public service orientation as essential elements of professional journalism (p. 33).

Berkowitz (2011), however, criticize the notion of universal occupational ideologies and argues that this consensus is not globally uniform, but rests in the particularities of national and regional cultures. He proposes a cultural vintage point of

news culture. Berkowitz emphasizes the importance of macro-level societal aspects such as the political environment, cultural context, and economic framework in assessing journalism culture. This implies that the so-called 'universal' professional values and norms of journalism are practiced differently in different linguistics, socio-cultural, economic, and political contexts. We can use this criticism for assessing journalism education as well. It can be argued that journalism culture as well as journalism education is closely linked to the cultural values of the society where news is produced and consumed.

## 1.3 Bangladesh's changing media landscape

Before proceeding with the study, it is important to discuss the changing media landscape in the country. From its independence until 1990, Bangladesh was a closed society, immune to the global forces that had affected the country's socio-political and economic structures (Shoesmith and Genilo: 2013). The government mainly controlled the media during this period. According to Shoesmith and Mahmud (2013), there were several daily newspapers, but there was strict official censorship. There were regular press 'advisories' by the military and this trend continued until the fall of the military regime in December 1990. For the broadcast media, the state-owned Bangladesh Television and Bangladesh Betar (radio) had a virtual monopoly.

The country's media landscape opened up at the beginning of the 1990s. Shoesmith and Genilo (2013) argue that the Bangladeshi media landscape changed due to three basic reasons: the introduction of new communication technologies, the impact of globalization, and the reintroduction of parliamentary democracy. The process started with satellite television and was made stronger by the Internet. Genilo and Shafi (2013) point out that in 1992, the government legalized the Television Receive Only satellite dish (TVRO) to satisfy the middle-class viewers of Dhaka City, who played a determining role in the elections. Within a short period, satellite dishes—despite being expensive—became a common fixture atop rooftops of many upmarket residential areas of the city. The following year, cable operators made it affordable for viewers to tune into satellite networks.

With the introduction of the Internet in the late 1990s, people in Bangladesh started receiving their news from sources other than the mainstream media. Mahmud and Nasreen (2009: 114) explained that "webzines have increasingly become popular in Bangladesh at a time when the demand for news is rising rapidly, fueled by political instability and the restrictions imposed on the media by the ruling powers of Bangladesh." Online and alternative sources began to satisfy the urban elites' increasing demand for information that was constantly updated.

Using Statistics published by Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC), Genilo (2018) showed the exponential growth of Internet usage in the country from 2000 to 2015. BTRC estimated that the number of Facebook users in Bangladesh reached 3.48 million by December 2018. This expansion of the Internet also meant the growth of online and alternative information sources.<sup>1</sup>

The introduction of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) coincided with the end of authoritarian rule. Shoemsmith and Mahmud (2013) explain that economic reforms followed soon after. Among the most notable reforms were the adoption of free market economic policies and the privatization of state-owned enterprises, which together helped the growth of the private media sector. Ullah (2016: 65) concurs that deregulation was the key to growth of the media industry in Bangladesh. Other contributing factors included the expansion of the country's middle class, increased literacy, higher purchasing power, and consumer demand for pluralistic media.

Since the launch of the first private television broadcaster in 1997, the number of licensed television stations has increased to 41 (Ministry of Information: Accessed March 23, 2019). All of the new stations are privately owned. In addition to commercial TV stations, Ullah and Akhter (2016b: 48) count 12 commercial FM stations, 16 community radios, and several hundred online news portals. The Ministry of Information's Department of Film and Publication (DFP) in May 2018 listed 504 daily newspapers and more than 150 periodicals throughout the country (DFP, 2018). Ullah and Akhter (2016b: 48) expressed that the thriving media industry has created a large demand for well-trained professionals. They also argued that the millennial generation in Bangladesh was increasingly becoming attracted to the growing journalism field because of job prospects and the perceived glamour of the profession. The expansion of the media industry since the beginning of the new millennium also influenced educational institutions to increase their capacities for journalism education.

## 1.4 Journalism education in Bangladesh — origin and growth

As outlined, the growth of journalism education in Bangladesh has gone hand in hand with a significant growth of the media industries since the 1990s. The first journalism program was introduced at the University of Dhaka as a post-graduate diploma course in 1962. The initial idea was to provide academic training to both professional and would-be journalists (Mahmud & Nasreen, 2009; Shoemsmith & Mahmud, 2009). The program was expanded to graduate level in 1967 and an undergraduate program was introduced in 1977. It was renamed "Mass communication and Journalism." This 'renaming' has

influenced the development of journalism education in Bangladesh when the subject was embedded as part of the "Mass Communication" or "Media Studies" programs. Shoemsmith and Mahmud (2009) argue that, given its origins and comprehensive program, Dhaka University's Mass Communication and Journalism department remains a dominant force in the media industry with virtually all senior staff in the industry having received their qualifications there (pp. 98–99).

It took three decades, until the University of Rajshahi became the second university in Bangladesh to introduce a "Mass Communication" degree in 1991. Three years later, the University of Chittagong began an undergraduate program in "Journalism and Mass Communication." The popularity of undergraduate programs in journalism and mass communication continued to rise among young people in Bangladesh. This encouraged a number of private universities to introduce journalism and media studies programs.

In 1993, only three universities offered undergraduate and graduate journalism, mass communication and media studies degrees in Bangladesh. This increased to 21 by the end of 2016. These academic institutions enroll around 900 students each year (Ullah, 2016). However, it is an issue of debate how many graduates pursued a career in journalism.

Apart from the universities, the government-run Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) has been giving in-profession training for working journalists since its establishment in 1976. The PIB expanded its scope and introduced a diploma program for prospective journalists in 2001. The other significant providers of journalism education in Bangladesh are NGOs, which occasionally offer trainings for in-profession journalists on issues like gender, environment, and business. Figures 1 and 2 (page 14) give an overview of journalism education in Bangladesh.

<sup>1</sup> See appendix, figure A1: Percentage of Internet users in Bangladesh (2000–2015), p. 51

## General and curricular profile of journalism programs in public universities

	DU	CU	RU	JU	JUN	BRUR	KU	BU	CoU
Year established	1962	1994	1991	2011	2009	2011	2015	2018	2015
Full-time academic staff	29	21	22	10	14	5	7	3	3
Part-time academic staff	10	0	2	9	0	3	8	0	0
Non-academic staff	13	6	8	6	4	6	3	2	1
Student number	262	370	250	300	307	353	120	20	144
Seats per year	60	70	50	40	80	50	40	20	53
Programs offered	BSS in MCJ MSS in MCJ MPhil/PhD	BSS in CAJ MSS in CAJ	BSS in MCJ MSS in MCJ MPhil/PhD	BSS in JMS MSS in JMS	BSS in MCJ MSS in MCJ MPhil/PhD	BSS in MCJ MSS in MCJ MPhil/PhD	BSS in MCJ	BA in MCJ	BSS in MCJ MSS in MCJ
Total credits	128 32	120 24	120 36	120 30	135 38	135 33	136	128	128 32

Figure 1 Source: Own research.

## General and curricular profile of journalism programs in private universities

	ULAB	Stamford	DIU	IUB	UODA	MIU	PCIU	VU	NBIU
Year established	2004	2005	2007	1993	2002	2013	2013	2015	2014
Full-time academic staff	19	10	7	16	10	5	4	3	2
Part-time academic staff	13	3	6	9	10	2	1	7	2
Non-academic staff	6	7	2	5	5	1	3	2	2
Student number	770	233	315	400	140	193	135	92	105
Seats per year	360	120	180	100 (estimate)	90	105	33 (estimate)	120	120
Programs offered	BSS in MSJ	BSS in JRN MSS in JRN	BSS in JMC MSS in JMC	BSS in Media and Commu- nication	BSS in CMS MSS in CMS	BSS in BJM	BSS in BPJ MSS in BPJ	BSS in JCMS	BSS in CJS
Total credits	129	140	142	127	144	135	133	124	123

Figure 2 Source: Own research.

## 1.5 Scope and limitations of the study

This study examines how aspiring journalists enter the profession. It seeks to find out the profile and motivations of aspiring journalists, their study progression, and challenges towards a career in journalism. It also investigates the skills they possess and to what extent educational institutions and media companies developed these skills.

This study, however, has some limitations. First, it does not cover aspiring journalists who never joined a journalism school—regardless of whether they failed to qualify for these schools or were unable to afford tuition fees (especially for private universities). It also does not investigate what happened to journalism students who left academic programs. First, it does not trace the whereabouts of aspiring journalists who leave or drop out of educational programs. They may have ended up never working in the media at all, switched to other careers, or never intended to become journalists in the first place.

Second, this study does not analyze the topics, learning outcomes, reference materials, and session activities of every course taught in journalism schools. Instead, it relies on the information provided by journalism faculty and heads of departments as well as course titles and descriptions.

The study also does not investigate the faculty composition and qualifications of the various journalism schools. Rather, it looks into student-faculty ratios and other education inputs such as facilities, co-curricular programs, and process management mechanisms.

Lastly, the study focuses on the major media houses in print, broadcast, and online. It does not investigate small and medium-scale outlets or those based outside Dhaka City. A future study can narrow this gap.

The skills of new and aspiring journalists referred to in this study are not confined to the traditional skills of finding, researching and writing news stories. Nowadays, journalists also need to know about media ethics and media legislation. And, of course, they need skills for the digital age relating to social media, digital security or data journalism. The Dhaka Tribune newspaper and the Media Studies and Journalism Department of the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB) jointly created a list of traditional, new, and specialized skills journalists must have to succeed in the profession. The skill sets are illustrated in figure 3:

### Skills sets to be possessed by aspiring journalists

#### TRADITIONAL SKILLS

- Finding own stories
- Language use
- News writing
- Interviewing
- Basic sub-editing
- Feature writing
- Basic photography
- Photo journalism
- Time management

#### SPECIALIZED SKILLS

- Media law
- Business journalism
- Health and safety
- Right to information act
- Environmental journalism
- Code of ethics in journalism
- Religious reporting
- Science reporting
- Copyright law
- Conflict reporting
- Data journalism

#### NEW SKILLS

- Cyber security
- Computer program knowledge
- Blogging
- Writing for multi-platforms
- User generated content
- Assembling news bulletins and audio/video packages moderating user comments
- Using web statistics to drive news agenda
- Remote working
- Writing for search engine optimization
- Video skills – recording and editing

Figure 3 Source: ULAB-Dhaka Tribune Dialogue on Journalism Skill Set, August 2013.

## 2. Conceptual framework

## 2.1 The leaky pipeline phenomenon

The conceptual framework of this study is based on Berryman's (1983) leaky pipeline metaphor. Berryman coined the metaphor when studying the attrition of women from science education. Berryman defines a leaky educational pipeline as a system where "a cohort enters to complete a degree of study but loses members as it progresses through the pipeline" (1983: 47). Berryman uses the metaphor to illustrate the large number of women (from various ethno-linguistic and racial backgrounds) who drop off from completing science education. Bennett (2011) adopted the metaphor of the leaky pipeline to explain the lack of women in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) careers in the United Kingdom, tracing the leak as far back as childhood when gender roles were taught. Dubois-Shaik and Fusulier (2013), meanwhile, use this image to describe academic careers and gender inequality in seven European countries. They recommend that policies must be devised to patch the leakage at those points where the pipeline loses more women than men.

The leaky pipeline model describes the progression of individuals. It shows the points where they fail to reach their destination (Genilo, 2012: 64), either because they leave the pipeline (leak) or because they are prevented from moving to the next stage (block or narrowing). In addition, some individuals may experience challenges where they cannot progress smoothly (clog) or just progress slowly (vertical segregation). The Leaky Pipeline model is used as a conceptual framework to examine the factors that hinder new and aspiring Bangladeshi journalists in preparing for and entering the profession. In this way it is possible to find out when and why aspiring journalism students decide against a career in journalism.

This is an important finding in determining where improvements in journalism education are needed. Conversely, it is equally important to examine the factors that promote the practice of journalism according to the main research questions. To this end, the factors that influence the course of study and career entry will not only be examined within the conceptual framework of the leaky pipeline model, but also to what extent they can be useful and motivating for the practice of journalism.

The focus of the current study is on aspiring journalists who are studying journalism at the universities. In addition, it looks at media and journalism education and media companies to get a comprehensive picture and to identify the potential leaks and clogs. For this particular study, the three main actors to be considered vis-a-vis progression into the journalism profession are (figure 4):

Aspiring journalists build their capacities in educational institutions, so they can enter the journalism profession with the proper skill set. Aspiring journalists are students who are studying journalism to attain entry requirements to the profes-

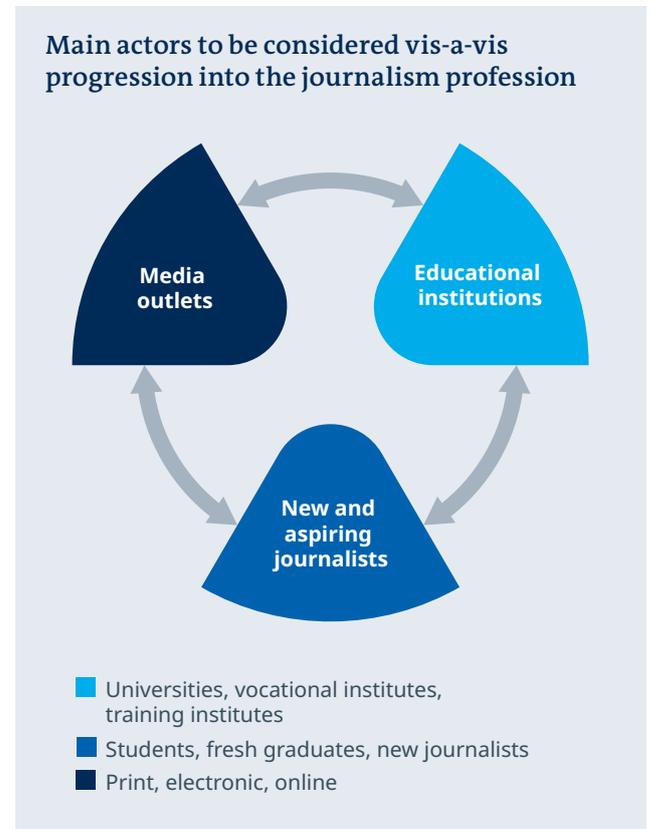


Figure 4 Source: Own research.

sion. New journalists, on the other hand, are those who have been in the profession for not more than three years. New journalists may also include those who completed their studies with a degree other than journalism, media, and communication. We consider both aspiring and new journalists to be the pool of talent who should be trained and developed by educational institutions and media houses so they can perform as quality journalists.

Journalism educational institutions include universities (both private and public) and vocational or training institutes that offer professional training in journalism, media, and communication. For the purposes of this study, media outlets are defined as mainstream news media which are now dominating Bangladesh's journalism field. The current media landscape of the country consists of state, private, and community media. The mainstream media outlets (both traditional and online) are potential employers of the graduates of journalism schools.

Aspiring journalists go through different stages as they aim to get their journalism skills and education. They try to enter the profession through various channels—undergraduate study, graduate study, professional studies at institutes, etc. Having been accepted into a journalism program, they must successfully complete this program and finally get a job in a media

## Entry and progression in journalism education and profession

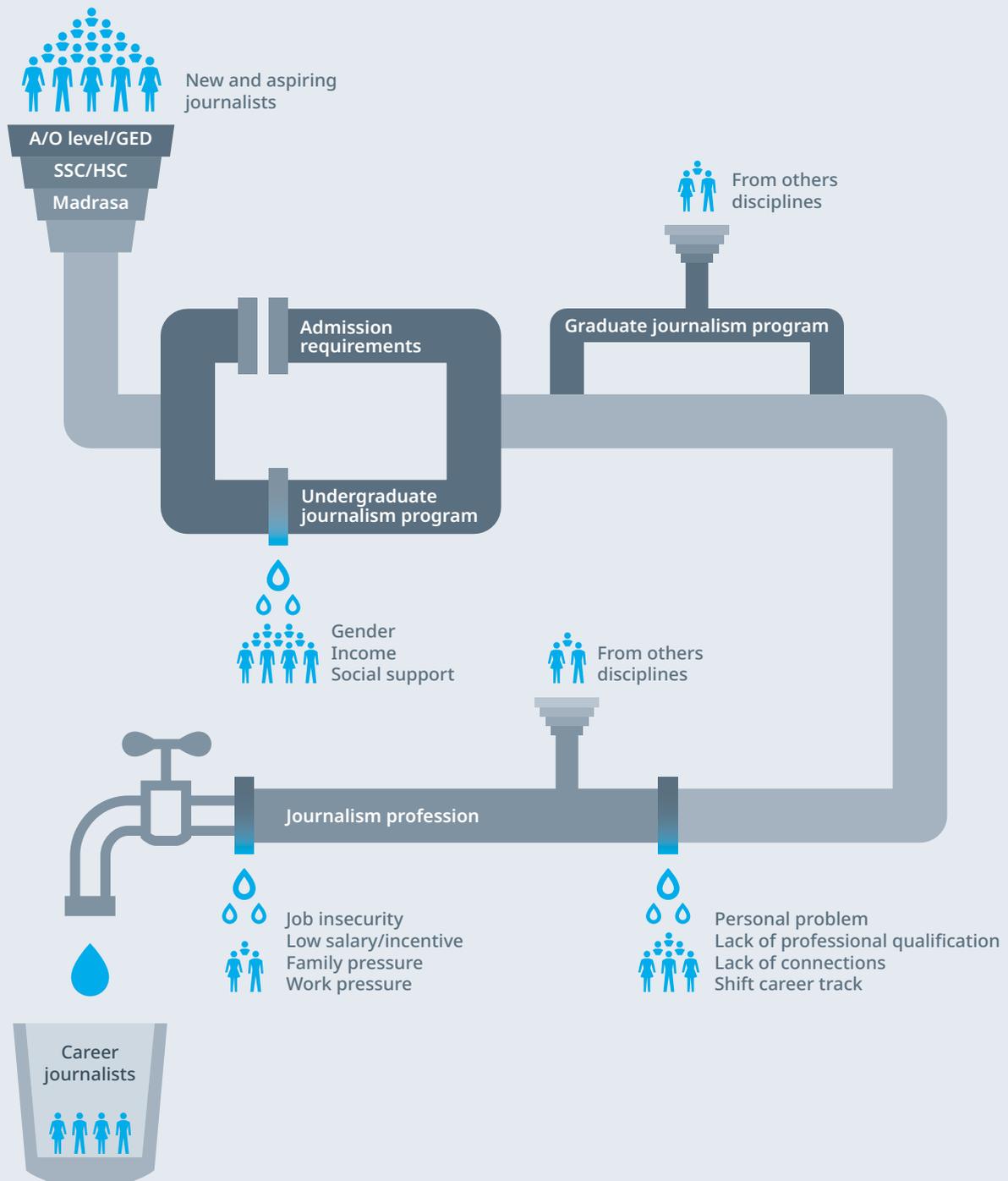


Figure 5 Source: Own research, based on Berryman (1983).

organization. At each stage, this metaphorical pipeline of journalism training can be leaky. Many aspiring journalists “leak” away due to personal, socio-economic and institutional factors. These include gender, income, lack of family and social support, lack of required skills, work conditions pressure, low salary and incentives, etc. Some new journalists are also lost to “leaks” in the pipeline. They may be unable to sustain or progress in the profession because they lack skills and many media organizations do not have orientation or mentoring programs. However, from the perspective of the media houses, this has more to do with the quality of the water that arrives at the end of the pipeline than where the rest of the water went, to stay in the metaphor. The diagram below, which the authors developed for this particular study, illustrates this further.

## 2.2 Possible reasons of leakage of potential journalists

### Factors that influence aspiring journalists as they enter journalism education

The possible factors affecting new and aspiring journalists’ entry into journalism education are:

- Gender, educational background, and income of families.
- Parental and social support.
- School and college support.
- Self-motivation, often related to perceptions of the profession (e.g., income, job security, and perceived social status).
- Self-reflection on journalism education: curriculum, extra/co-curricular activities, facilities, and faculty quality.
- Admission requirements.

One factor limiting the talent pool of aspiring journalists is gender. The profession is dominated by men, and this can already be seen in the gender ratio in journalism schools. The male to female ratio is 5:1 at the entry level of the profession (Sultana: 2006). In another study conducted ten years later, Ullah and Akhter (2016a) still find the number of women in the profession to be disappointingly low. They account for only 10 percent of the total number of professionals. In addition, it is argued that sustaining a career becomes difficult for married female journalists when they have to balance family and profession.

Another factor affecting aspiring journalists is the lack of parental support. Kabir (2012) interviewed a student who “experienced bad talk” after changing his study area and began doing undergraduate work in mass communication. His parents told him that studying journalism and mass communication has “no value” and that the only job he can get is that of a journalist. Kabir says parents in Bangladesh prefer medicine, engineering, business studies and English as study areas for their chil-

dren. Many parents do not wish their children to study journalism and mass communication. This leads to a lack of motivation, as the perception of the profession and also journalism education in society are so poor. The curriculum and the quality of the faculties are considered to be quite low.

Admission requirements—especially language skills—also play an important role in attracting potential journalists.

### Factors affecting progression in journalism education

- Journalism school governance and curriculum: mission/vision, goals, curriculum review process.
- Curriculum mapping: combination of traditional, new, and specialized skill sets.
- Faculty (student-faculty ratio), physical facilities (lab and equipment), co-curricular programs (clubs and apprenticeship programs in journalism).
- Mechanisms to integrate graduates in the workplace: internships, portfolio, career center, alumni network, MOUs with media outlets, consultations/meeting with media practitioners, etc.
- Assessment of learning: Mechanisms to assess student skills when they graduate.

One factor affecting the performance of educational institutions is the lack of clarity regarding program outcomes. If the school does not use an outcome-based curriculum, it is difficult to ascertain the knowledge, attitude, and skills its students will have when they graduate. Curricula sometimes do not reflect the needs of media organizations. This is often due to a lack of consultation and cooperation between academia and the industry. Often, there is a disconnect between academe and industry. By interviewing editors, working at media organizations, Ullah (2016) finds that they perceive journalism schools in Bangladesh as a place to produce a workforce for public relations and development organizations. The editors claim the graduates have poor language skills and lack skills needed for creating and cultivating news sources, gathering information, and writing news. Such a disconnect also impacts the integration of graduates into the workplace e.g. through internships. Lecturing at the universities is very theoretical, so graduates often do not have a portfolio of their own work samples to show when applying. Many educational institutions do not have career centers although the existing alumni networks help a lot.

Other factors affecting aspiring journalists are fees, curriculum, assessment of learning methods, student-faculty ratio, physical facilities, co-curricular activities, and process management mechanisms. Whether an educational institution can teach its students practical skills is key for them acquiring the skills they need for the industry.

## **Factors affecting entry and progression into journalism profession**

- Internship policies of media houses (if any) and collaborations with educational institutions.
- Hiring policies: examination, viva, qualifications, job openings per year, salary scale, gender preference, etc.
- In-house training: orientation, capacity building, on the job training, etc.
- Promotion and career pathing of aspiring journalists, permanent or contractual, promotion policies, etc.
- Perception of skills of aspiring journalists: traditional, new, and specialized.

In a report on journalists in Bangladesh, Ullah and Akhter (2016a) examine the profile and perceived roles of journalists, their professional ethics, professional autonomy, and current changes in the profession. According to the report, 81 percent of survey respondents believe that more journalists have university degrees while 77.3 percent perceive journalists to have a degree in journalism. Around 91.4 percent saw the need to use search engines and 88.6 percent expressed the need for more technical skills. Such perceptions about the role of journalists and changes in the profession affect how media outlets would hire, orient, and train aspiring journalists. Also, these factors influence their perception of journalism education and the skills of aspiring journalists and vice versa.

Aside from these, factors that may affect career progression in journalism include hiring policies, job security, promotion policies, and in-house training. Journalists need to feel secure in their workplace as well as have reasonable wages to continue working in the profession.



# 3. Methodological framework

This study takes a mixed method to gather data from three main actors— aspiring and new journalists; journalism schools and educators; and journalism professionals. It consists of a survey, in-depth interviews, curriculum mapping and document analysis. A detailed description of sample composition and methods of data collection is given below.

### 3.1 Getting data from aspiring and new journalists

To gather data from aspiring and new journalists, the study conducted a survey and in-depth interviews. The survey was conducted among the current students of journalism, media, and communication at different universities. It provides an overview of the factors that influence aspiring journalists' entry into journalism schools, their progression, and perceived interest to become a journalist. In-depth interviews with new journalists, who have work experience of three years or less, provided insights into factors affecting their integration and development in professional journalism.

Graduate students as well as senior level undergraduate students from three public (DU, RU, and CU) and three private universities (ULAB, Stamford and DIU) took part in the survey.

The sample size for the survey of journalism students was 327 and represented around 15 percent of total journalism students in the country. The survey relied on a non-probability convenience sample for pragmatic reasons. The confidence level is 95 percent.

In addition, a separate survey was conducted with 25 students of different non-university institutes offering journalism training. The sample institutes are the National Institute of Mass Communication (NIMC) and Bangladesh Institute of Journalism and Electronic Media (BIJEM).

The survey was conducted using a structured questionnaire with some open-ended questions at the end. For pragmatic reasons, the survey was conducted among the students in the classroom after the end of a regular lecture session. A research assistant distributed the questionnaires to the students. The selection of survey respondents relied on the following criteria:

1. For public universities, graduate students and senior level (third and fourth year) undergraduate students.
2. For private universities, senior (third and fourth year) undergraduate students.
3. For training institutes, current trainees of journalism courses.



Figure 6 Source: Own research.

### Sampling frame for the survey

SI.	TYPE OF INSTITUTION	TOTAL NUMBER OF JOURNALISM STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE	SAMPLE SIZE
1.	Public University	1296	58.83	192
2.	Private University	907	41.17	135
	Total	2203	100	327

Figure 7 Source: Own research.

The questions were clustered in different groups which began with general questions, such as respondent's profile, type of university, level and year of studies, and educational background of high school. The other clusters of the questionnaire included questions regarding the student's motivations for pursuing a journalism degree, interest in pursuing a career in journalism, challenges related to gender biases, self-reflection on skill sets, self-reflection on quality of journalism education, and the relation between theory and practice in journalism education.

The survey was conducted between October and November 2018. The data was processed and analyzed using the statistical software SPSS.

In addition to the survey data, the researchers also conducted eight in-depth interviews of new journalists using a semi-structured interview guide. Only the new journalists with less than three years of experience in professional journalism were selected for the interviews. The respondents were selected to represent print, broadcast and online news media. Two young journalists of daily newspapers: The Daily Star and The Daily Prothom Alo; two radio journalists of Bangladesh Betar and Radio Today; three television journalists of BTV, Channel i and Somoy TV; and one young journalist of online news media bdnews24.com were interviewed. An interview guide was used for the in-depth qualitative interviews of the new journalists.

### 3.2 Getting data from journalism schools and educators

12 educational institutions were selected for this study. There were six public universities, three private universities, two public journalism institutes (diploma and vocational), and one private journalism institute (vocational). Below are the details of

the selected institutions. The selection of private and public universities was based on the student size of the institution.

These methods were used to gather information from educational institutions: curriculum mapping, in-depth interviews of department heads/journalism faculty/coordinator, and physical facilities observation. The curriculum mapping mainly looked at distribution of courses with traditional, new, and specialized skills to identify the gaps between industry requirement and program learning outcomes. The curricula were analyzed using a coding framework. Prior to the beginning of the coding, a methodological workshop was organized with the five coders to ensure inter-coder reliability at 90 percent using the following formula suggested by Holsti (1969: 138-141):

$C.R = \frac{2M}{(N1+N2)}$  where "M is the number of coding decisions on which the two coders are in agreement, and N1 and N2 refer to the number of coding decisions made by coder 1 and 2, respectively".

In addition, the researchers conducted in-depth interviews with the head of department and the coordinator of journalism courses at each educational institution. In case no such management position was found at the institute, a senior faculty member teaching journalism courses was interviewed. These 12 key informants were knowledgeable about the profile of their department, including its governance and process management mechanisms. For the vocational institutions, interviews were conducted with the executive director, senior faculty, and/or executive secretary.

A research assistant took notes during the interview and prepared a protocol for each interview. All interviews were recorded using a digital audio recorder with prior consent of the interviewees. The interviews were analyzed following the basic tenets of qualitative data analysis.

#### Educational institutes included in the study

SI.	TYPE	INSTITUTION(S)
1.	Public University	University of Dhaka (DU: 1962), University of Rajshahi (RU: 1991), University of Chittagong (CU: 1994), Jagannath University (JNU: 2009), Begum Rokeya University Rangpur (BRUR: 2011), Jahangirnagar University (JU: 2011)
2.	Private University	University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB: 2004), Stamford University Bangladesh (Stamford: 2005), Daffodil International University (DIU: 2007)
3.	Public institute	Press Institute Bangladesh (PIB: 1976), National Institute of Mass Communication (NIMC: 1980)
4.	Private institute	Bangladesh Institute of Journalism and Electronic Media (BIJEM: 2003)

Figure 8 Source: Own research.

### 3.3 Getting data from journalism professionals

The researchers conducted nine in-depth interviews with senior media professionals who were in decision making positions for recruitment and mentoring the newly recruited journalists. The respondents were selected based on the following criteria:

1. They were currently working as human resource (HR) manager and/or chief news editor in a news media organization; and
2. They must have been working in the media sector for at least 10 years.

Nine respondents were selected from different media outlets. They represent print, (The Daily Prothom Alo and The Daily Star), online, (bdnews24.com, which is the first and largest online news portal; bilingual), radio, (Bangladesh Betar and Radio Today) and television (BTV, the top-ranked private mixed channel, Channel i, and the top-ranked private news channel, Somoy TV). A separate interview guide was used to interview senior media professionals.

## 4. Findings and discussion

The main findings of the research are organized around the process of aspiring journalists' entry to journalism education, study progression, and entry to professional journalism. This research can identify five potential points of leakage in line with the leaky pipeline phenomenon. The phases are: (1) entering the journalism school; (2) progress in journalism schools; (3) completing journalism school; (4) entering the journalism profession; and (5) progression in the journalism profession. Gender issues also have an impact on the decision to work as a journalist or not.

#### 4.1 Entering journalism school

The majority of the journalism students in Bangladesh is between the ages of 22 and 26 (62.08%), male (72.48%), and studied science and humanities at their high schools. The profile of survey respondents is shown in figures A2 and A3.<sup>2</sup> The survey results show that there are considerable differences between private and public university respondents in terms of their origin and income status. Private university students mostly come from urban (43.7%) and semi-urban (28.89%) areas; and from upper (31.1%) and middle (43.7%) income families. Public university journalism students, on the other hand, mainly hail from rural (52.6%) areas and from lower income families (59.9%). This is due to the fact that most of the private universities in Bangladesh are located in the capital Dhaka, which mainly attracts urban-based affluent students. The high tuition fees of journalism programs at the private universities are the main reason that only the affluent students are attracted to enroll.

A brief comparison between public and private universities in terms of tuition fees may illustrate the scenario more clearly. Most parts of public university education in Bangladesh are subsidized with government funds. On average, a bachelor student pays about 15,000 to 20,000 BDT (187.50 to 250 USD), while a master student spends about 5,000 to 10,000 BDT (62.50 to 125 USD) at public universities for the entire duration of their studies. This includes fees for admission, tuition, exam, transportation, and limited medical facilities, among other things. Journalism programs at private universities are more expensive. The tuition fees range from BDT 213,000 to BDT 889,000 (USD 2,662.50 to USD 11,112.50) for a four-year undergraduate journalism program.

<sup>2</sup> See appendix, figure A2: Respondents profile in terms of age, gender, religion and civil status, p. 52.

Figure A3: Respondents profile in terms of secondary and higher secondary education, p. 51.

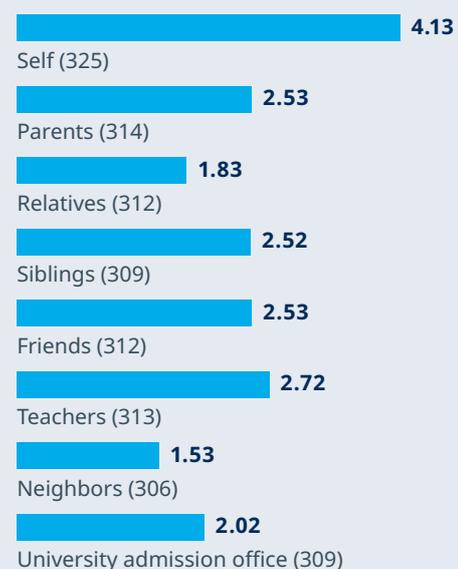
<sup>3</sup> See Appendix, figure A4: Comparative profile of public and private university respondents' in terms of place of origin and income status; p. 53.

The clear distinction of socio-economic background between public and private university journalism students is also reflected in the interview data drawn from the heads of different journalism departments. Private university heads interviewed for this study explain that most of their students belong to the middle class and that their students mostly come from Dhaka City and other urban/semi-urban areas. However, DIU department head Sheikh Shariful Islam mentions that some of their "students come from remote places."

DU Chair Kaberi Gayen states that the majority of their students come from urban/semi-urban areas, while RU Chair Abdullah Al Mamun perceives the student population to be equally divided between urban and rural. The chairpersons of JU, BRUR, and JNU have perceptions that are consistent with the survey data. They describe that most of their students come from outside Dhaka City and are not financially solvent. Jagannath University department head Shah Nister Kabir mentions that many students need financial support to continue education. They do jobs such as tutoring high school students in order to sustain their daily living expenses and even to support their parents back home.<sup>3</sup>

Asked, how they decided to study journalism, most of the survey respondents mention that they decided to enter journalism school based on their own judgment and self-motivation (with a mean rating of 4.14). One new journalist mentions in an in-depth interview that it was her "dream to become a journal-

#### Degree of perceived influence from various sources on studying journalism



\* valid responses (n) are within parentheses

Figure 9 Source: Own research.

ist from childhood.” Another says that he “loved reading newspapers, listening to radio news, and watching TV news.” ULAB Journalism Department faculty member Mahmud Unnabi states that “many students plead with their parents in order to study journalism at the department. They are committed to learn and have high ambitions.”

In deciding to enroll in journalism, other influences come from friends (2.73), high school and college teachers (2.72), parents (2.53), and siblings (2.52) as revealed in figure 9 (page 27).

Figure 10 illustrates the strongest motivations of university respondents for choosing to study journalism. The main motivation is to make an impact on society (4.46), travel (4.46), wanting a job with freedom (4.45), creativity (4.43), and contributing to society (4.41). Weaker motivations for aspiring journalists include job excitement (3.83), financial security (3.75), and celebrity hood (2.53). Invariably, the aspiring journalists are not motivated by fame and fortune, rather they chose this field of study to travel and make an impact on society.

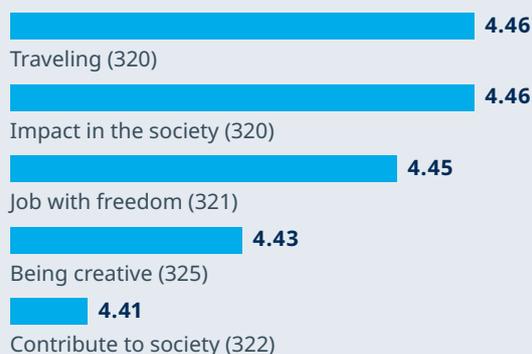
University respondents<sup>4</sup> view the advantages of journalism profession in terms of social status mobility (3.45), community influence (3.28), promotion opportunity (3.21), and opinion leadership (3.01). They do not see advantages of the profession in terms of income status (2.77) and job security (2.36).

Although most respondents select to study journalism by themselves, more than two-thirds (67.89%) have the support of their family and friends. The types of support they get from the family and social network are financial (38.84%), moral (36.09%), and advice (28.75%). From schools and colleges, a few get some support through career talks (8.26%) and receive information regarding the societal contribution of the profession (7.03%). Importantly, even the lack of family support does not hinder aspiring journalists to pursue journalism degrees. At least 61.20% of the students find ways to pay for their tuition and living expenses mainly relying on part-time jobs (figures 11 and 12).

The in-depth interviews with journalism professors and a document analysis of admission criteria show a clear distinction between public and private universities. At private universities, the central administration takes care of the admission procedures for journalism programs. Admission is open to all education systems: SSC/HSC, Dakhil/Alim, O/A Level, and GED, and the admission requirements are prescribed by the University Grants Commission (UGC). Public universities set their own admission requirements, which vary from university to university. Applicants can select their department depending on their admission test results. There are some journalism departments that impose additional grade requirements in SSC/HSC

<sup>4</sup> See appendix, figure A5: Respondents’ perception regarding advantages of journalism profession, p. 51.

### Strongest motivations for choosing journalism education



\* valid responses (n) are within parentheses

Figure 10 Source: Own research.

### Forms of family support received by the respondents



Figure 11 Source: Own research.

exam results and procedures such as a department interview. Moreover, public universities have reserved seats for SSC/HSC streams such as humanities, science, and business. JU ensures a 50:50 admission split for male and female applicants. In 2018, there are an estimated 463 seats per year in the journalism departments of public universities and 1,095 seats per year at private universities. The faculty and student ratio at the public universities is better than the private universities. There is a total of 114 full time faculty members at the public universities and 76 faculty members at the private universities.

## 4.2 Progression in journalism school

There are 18 journalism and media-related programs at different public and private universities in Bangladesh. All these 18 universities offer undergraduate degrees in journalism or journalism-related degrees and 12 of them offer master's degrees. Journalism is not taught as a separate degree program at any of the universities (Ullah: 2016). Among the private universities, UB and ULAB offer master's degrees, but not specific to jour-

nalism. BU, VU, NBIU, and MIU do not have master's programs. At public universities, most of the undergraduate students proceed to complete their master's degree after they have finished their undergraduate degrees. At the private universities, many bachelor program graduates enter the job market directly, or they get their master's degrees abroad or at other local universities. In addition, graduates from other disciplines enter the master's programs of private universities with an objective to shift their career toward media, communication and journalism. There are only five universities offering MPhil and PhD Degrees: DU, RU, JU, JNU and BRUR. As per the Private University Act of 1992, private universities in Bangladesh cannot offer MPhil and PhD programs.

Ullah (2013) identifies seven stages of change that occurred in journalism education since the 1960s: (1) vocational training to diploma, (2) basic journalism to mass communication and journalism, (3) interdisciplinary approach, (4) liberal humanistic to social science approach, (5) technology-less to technology-plus approach, (6) privatization of public education, and (7) collaborative efforts with foreign universities. According to Ullah (2016), the curricular shifts in the country were prompted by the realities of political change coupled with socio-economic transformation, demands from journalism graduates for job-specific skills, the introduction of new communication technologies in media houses, and the influence of globalization on journalism education.

At the onset, similar to the experiences in several countries, many practitioners treat journalism as an open profession for all. One does not need a formal university degree in journalism or communication to be a journalist (Ullah, 2008). The media practitioners maintain that journalists will receive the best schooling in the editorial offices, not in journalism departments. However, in interviews with Ullah in 2008, DU journalism professors Sakhawat Ali Khan and Golam Rahman observe that the lack of journalism education among journalists is one of the primary reasons for a proliferation of ill-trained and irresponsible mass media practitioners. They argue that communication and media are great mobility multipliers in society and agents of modernity. With this, journalism takes a more scholarly turn under the umbrella of communication and/or media studies.

Due to this development, the BCDJC-UNESCO (2009) survey reports that no journalism curricula can be described as traditional given that their syllabi cover a range of courses from mass communication, media studies, digital production, sociology courses from mass communication, media studies, digital production, sociology, and so on. The report explains that the syllabi are a mixture of journalism, media studies, communication, mass communications and multimedia courses. The syllabi are also more theory-based and need more practical courses.



Figure 12 Source: Own research.

Ullah (2008) notes that the movement towards the third and fourth stages (the interdisciplinary approach and a liberal humanistic to social science approach) was brought about by student demand as they aspired for greater job opportunities. Ullah and Akther (2016a) explain that the normative practice was that higher education should be about gathering knowledge and generating new ideas. But, nowadays, educators cannot ignore demands from the profession. There is a need to consider the demand of the industry and society at large when preparing the curricula. Bangladeshi journalism educators generally accept journalism's role in public life. Private universities also acknowledge the media's commercial nature.

In this sense, some differences have emerged in journalism education in the country. On the one hand, there are the public universities (like DU, RU, CU, BRUR, JUN and JU) that emphasize social sciences and liberal arts with the aim of producing well-trained graduates for media and government entities. They strongly oppose the teaching of trade courses such as advertising and public relations in journalism because they think these are more relevant to business and marketing studies (Ullah and Akther: 2016a). Instead, they focus on the sociological links between media and politics. The newly established journalism departments based in Dhaka (such as Stamford University and DIU) also belong to this group. They have almost completely replicated the DU curricula, since external members from DU are the course advisers (Ullah and Akther: 2016a).

On the other hand, there are private universities (such as ULAB and IUB) that have taken a pro-industry approach to education. Their course offerings are focused on improving the professional skill sets of their graduates and measuring student success in terms of employability. They put emphasis on the application of new technologies in line with the job requirements in the media industry (Ullah and Akther: 2016a). They invest a lot in their media laboratories and equipment. However, these universities have a liberal arts foundation for all their students, which enables them to have an interdisciplinary and problem-solving approach.

These findings help explain the results of the present study. The curricular profiles of journalism programs at universities are presented in figures 1 and 2 (see page 14).

The succeeding discussions center on nine out of the 18 universities with journalism and/or journalism-related programs. These were already mentioned in the methodology section of this paper. We can ascertain some common underlying philosophies from the vision, missions and goal statements of the nine journalism programs.<sup>5</sup>

To put these vision, missions, and goal statements, into practice, journalism programs should formulate a curriculum. However, only seven of the nine programs have complete curricula. Two programs (RU and BRUR) only have course syllabi and are still completing their curricula. According to the department heads,

### Consultation with different stakeholders in curriculum design and review

	 DU	 RU	 CU	 JU	 JUN	 BRUR	 ULAB	 Stamford	 Daffodil University
Own faculty	×	*	×	×	×	*	×	×	×
External faculty			×	×	×		×	×	×
Current students								×	
Industry professionals				×	×		×	×	×
University alumni							×	×	×
Others							×		

Figure 13 Source: Own research. \* no complete curriculum

<sup>5</sup> See appendix, figure A6: Main discourses in the vision, missions, and goal statements of journalism schools, p. 54.

## Teaching methods utilized in selected journalism programs

	DU	RU	CU	JU	JUN	BRUR	ULAB	Stamford	DIU
Lecture/ Guest lecture	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Peer learning							×		
Group discussion		×	×				×	×	
Field visit	×	×		×	×	×	×	×	×
Portfolio							×		
Online method							×		
Practiced based			×		×		×	×	×
Presentation		×			×	×	×	×	×
Seminar/Workshop	×			×	×	×	×	×	

Figure 14 Source: Own research.

all journalism programs have a syllabus or curriculum committee that reviews and revises their curriculum. In the process of doing so, some programs (JU, ULAB, DIU, and Stamford) consult their alumni and industry professionals. Others simply consult leading academics (JNU), while two do not have provisions to consult external stakeholders (DU and CU). Stamford consults its students regarding the curriculum while ULAB works with foreign consultants during curriculum review (see figure 13).

The programs use a variety of teaching methodologies to put the curriculum into practice. The preferred teaching method at all universities are lectures with or without accompanying PowerPoint presentations. Aside from these, the universities organize field visits to media houses, guest lectures, forums, and workshops. When forums are organized, the universities usually invite media personalities to inspire students. RU and CU regularly organize group discussions, and there are project-based learning activities at JNU. There is a greater emphasis on practical and active learning approaches at ULAB. Students are required to create portfolios in many of their courses. Students file these portfolios, so they can present them to a panel of academics in their final semester. At Stamford and DIU, the students take part in project-based learning activities, field trips, and give oral presentations.

The student-faculty ratio of the universities is included in the study. The data shows that DU and RU have the most ideal ratios with 10:1 and 11:1, respectively. ULAB and DIU have the highest student-faculty ratios with 40:1 and 45:1, respectively.<sup>6</sup>

The various journalism programs have established co-curricular and extra-curricular activities to augment the curriculum. These activities enable students to refine their professional skill sets, as they can also practice their craft outside the classroom (see figure 14).

As the figure 15 on page 32 shows, only RU, CU, ULAB and DIU have journalism-related extra- and co-curricular programs. RU has a campus newspaper (both print and online) and campus radio (to be launched soon) while CU has an online news portal. ULAB (print) and DIU (print and online) have campus papers. They also have campus radio, campus TV and communication or media clubs. ULAB also has a photography apprenticeship program to train future photojournalists. In addition, ULAB has a fact watch center to make its students aware of fake news, media literacy, and data journalism.

The extent to which programs undertake practical activities largely depends on their learning facilities and equipment.

<sup>6</sup> See appendix, figure A7: Student-faculty ratio in selected journalism programs, p. 54.

DU and CU have made great strides in improving their media lab facilities. The same can be said of DIU. ULAB, on the other hand, has always invested heavily in its media laboratory. The other departments are still struggling to build their media lab facilities. RU, for one, has plans to start a campus radio. A community radio was established at BRU in Rangpur, but it is not run by the journalism department. Figure 16 describes the media labs of journalism programs with the most learning facilities.

The various programs have developed process management mechanisms to improve their operations. However, these seem to be more developed at some universities than at others. DU, RU, JU, BRUR, and Stamford neither have strategic plans, nor do they let the students evaluate the teachers. CU and JNU do not have teacher evaluation by students but have strategic plans. Strategic plans are important since these spell out how a department assesses its present and determines its future direction. ULAB has both student evaluation and stra-

### Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities at selected public and private universities

	 DU	 RU	 CU	 JU	 JUN	 BRUR	 ULAB	 Stamford	 Daffodil University
Campus newspaper		X					X		X
Online news portal		X	X						X
Campus radio		X					X		X
Campus television							X		X
Photography apprenticeship							X		
Photography club				X			X		
Fact watch (fact checker)							X		

Figure 15 Source: Own research.

### Learning facilities in selected journalism programs

<b>DU</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 5 mbps internet speed, computer lab, photo lab, media lab</li> <li>- Digital camera 09, video camera 05, editing panel 01</li> </ul>	<b>RU</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wi-Fi with 2 mbps speed, computer lab (25 PC), radio studio (in process), video cam: 3; audio recorder: 4; still cam: 4</li> </ul>
<b>ULAB</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wi-Fi with 2 mbps speed, studio, camera store, editing lab: 02 (22 editing panels), audio studio, film screening room, computer lab: 06 (shared), video camera: 13, DSLR camera: 26, shooting light set: 43, microphone set: 8, field sound mixer: 2, track set: 1, dolly: 1</li> </ul>	<b>DIU</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- TV station, radion station, practicum lab, media lab, computer lab, video camera, DSLR, multicam shooting facility, digital lighting system, shooting equipment, chroma screen, 2 iMac, 12 editing machine, 35 computers for design and word processing</li> </ul>

Figure 16 Source: Own research.

### Process management mechanisms of selected journalism programs

	DU	RU	CU	JU	JUN	BRUR	ULAB	Stamford	DIU
Student evaluation							×		×
Chair/Authority evaluation	×			×			×	×	×
Peer evaluation									
Teachers' report							×		
Strategic plan			×		×		×		

Figure 17 Source: Own research.

tegic plans. It even requires lecturers to submit reports after every session and after every semester. In the session reports, teachers state the session topic, methodology, and problems encountered. In semester reports, teachers mention whether they followed the course outline as planned, where they encountered problems and what improvements they suggest for the next term. All departments practice faculty evaluation by the department chair. ULAB and DIU undertake this annually while the rest conduct it every promotion period. Peer evaluation is not done at any department (see figure 17).

All journalism programs assess student learning when the students fulfil their academic requirements. In the graduate program, public universities mostly use a comprehensive examination as an assessment tool. In the undergraduate program, public universities and DIU hold a viva interview. The viva board includes external panel members. At DU, ULAB, JNU, Stamford, and DIU, the students receive a grade for their performance in the internship. Aside from the internship, ULAB requires a portfolio presentation while DIU asks for a report.<sup>7</sup>

Most university respondents<sup>8</sup> are satisfied with their internship experience. The ratings are above 3.5 in all aspects except “university internship process” (3.46). Some of the aspects are rated close to 4, notably learning experience (3.9), faculty adviser guidance (3.89), and placement (3.82). However, the ratings differ significantly in some respects between public university respondents and private university respondents. Respondents from private universities give high ratings to all aspects of their internship experience: placement, faculty adviser guidance, university internship process, work environment, work supervisor guidance, learning experience, networking oppor-

tunities, and time management skills. They give the highest ratings to learning experience (4.19), faculty adviser guidance (4.07), and placement (4.02). Public university respondents give ratings that are below average to the aspects university internship process (2.59), work supervisor guidance (2.80), and learning experience (2.93). The highest is placement with 3.42.

University respondents rate their overall journalism education experience as moderate. Most of the aspects receive a rating over 3. They rate faculty quality the highest (3.61), followed by curriculum (3.47), teaching and learning (3.34), assessment of learning (3.27), facilities (3.18), resource materials (3.16), and extra/co-curricular activities (3.13). Research opportunities (2.81) and job placement support (2.84) receive the lowest ratings.<sup>9</sup>

Four new journalists who graduated from private universities were interviewed. They say they do not find a mismatch between their experience in school and in the newsroom. They add their university taught them the basics in journalism and provided them opportunities to undertake diversified practical work. One new journalist mentions that he learned a lot from being with campus television and from the photography apprenticeship program. Another mentions the benefit of working at campus radio. He says that “the standard of journalism education in private universities is satisfactory. They are trying to maintain an international standard.” However, the new journalists mention the need for more collaborative agreements between industry and university. They also urge the career service center to improve its efficiency and expand its services.

Apart from these new journalists who graduated from private universities, two new journalists who graduated from public

<sup>7</sup> See appendix, figure A8: Program assessment of learning utilized select journalism programs, p. 54.

<sup>8</sup> See appendix, figure A9: Respondents' assessment of their internship program, p. 55.

<sup>9</sup> See appendix, figure A10: Respondents' assessment of the standard of journalism education, p. 55.

universities were interviewed. They observe that there is a mismatch between their experience in school and in the newsroom. One describes her education as theory-based and says that the curriculum did not focus on skills. The other new journalist mentions that universities

**“ are teaching long year back issues and theories. Modern journalism needs practical work. Our teachers focused on print media journalism, but the world has moved to new media journalism.**

Nevertheless, they are grateful to their faculty for providing them with general knowledge about journalism, the media industry, and social issues confronting the country and for helping develop their analytical and critical thinking skills.

The interviews with department chairs show that there are no career advice centers at public universities. RU and CU, however, are set to open their respective centers in autumn 2019 with the help of DW Akademie. They signed MOUs with three leading media organizations of the country—The Daily Star, Channel i and Radio Today—regarding internships. CU is also negotiating internship agreements with regional level media houses. CU has the advantage that many national media outlets have regional offices in Chittagong. Generally, however, institutional links between universities and media outlets hardly exist and only a few lecturers have practical experience in the field of journalism. JU has a career club guiding the students in preparing CVs and searching for jobs. At JNU, the alumni association helps students with job searches. At the private universities, there are career service centers that groom students, help them write CVs, search for jobs, and get internship placements. ULAB has MOUs with media organizations so they can provide internships for their students.

The study findings suggest that educational institutions lack mechanisms to integrate their graduates into the workplace. Only a few universities have career centers for their graduating students. Two universities compensate the lack of career centers with a career club and an active alumni association. Five of the nine universities have internship programs and very few have signed MOUs with media organizations for internships.

### 4.3 Completion of journalism school

Over half (51.4%) of the university respondents are interested in choosing journalism as a future career. One new journalist interviewed expresses that “journalists have a significant role to play in society. They can contribute to shape the opinions of people. They present the truth and represent the nation.” Another mentions that she “wants to make an impact in soci-

ety through journalism.” Another yet expresses that “the most attractive benefit of being a journalist is that journalists can pursue knowledge and lead a simple life provided s/he is honest and enjoys job security.”

However, other university respondents have other careers in mind. About one-third (32.7%) is interested in public service jobs while a similar number (32.1%) is looking at public relations. One-fourth (26.6%) of respondents is interested in the development sector. According to the survey, private university respondents are more inclined towards journalism (65.9%), public relations, (31.1%) and development communication (29.6%) as career options after graduation. For public university respondents, the most popular options include journalism (41.1%), public service (40.6%), and public relations (32.8%).<sup>10</sup>

Most of those interested in journalism aspire to careers in the news media. Television ranks highest with a mean rating of

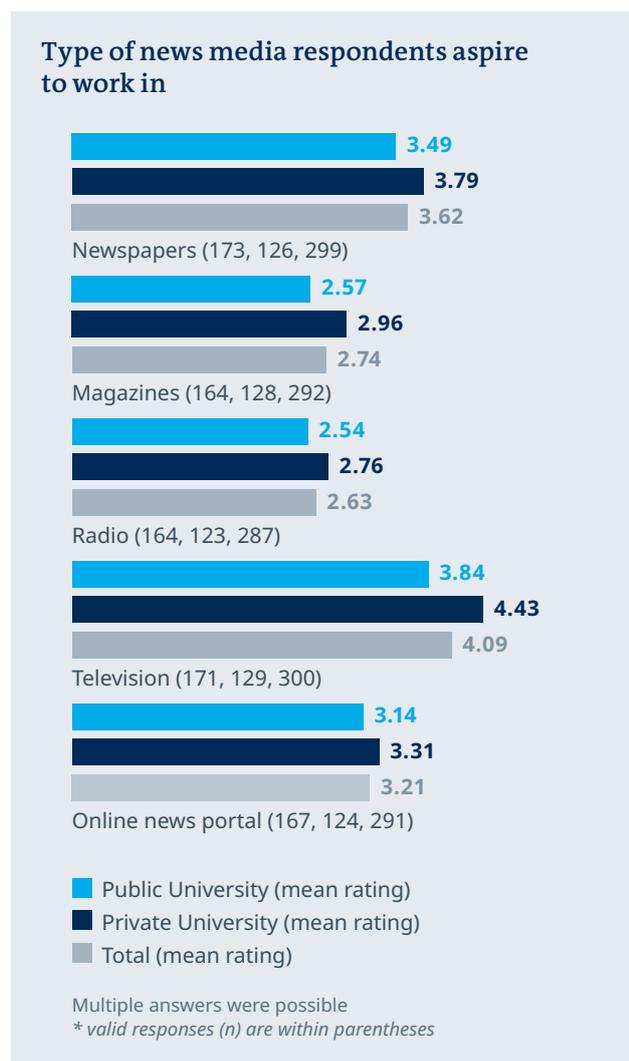
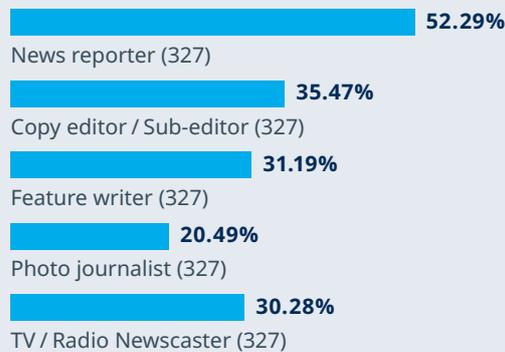


Figure 18 Source: Own research.

<sup>10</sup> See appendix, figure A11: Communication-related career options of respondents, p. 56.

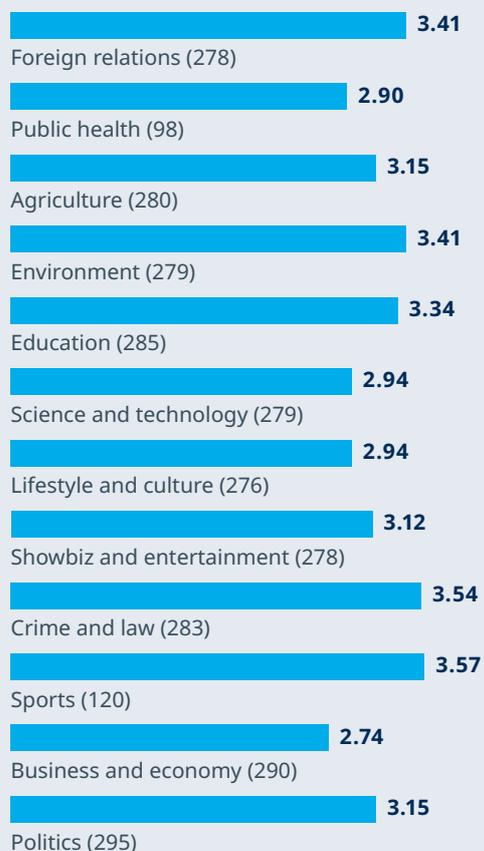
### Newsroom positions respondents aspire for



Multiple answers were possible  
\* valid responses (n) are within parentheses

Figure 19 Source: Own research.

### Beats the respondents aspire to work in



\* valid responses (n) are within parentheses

Figure 20 Source: Own research.

(4.09), then come newspapers (3.62), and online news portal (3.21). One new journalist interviewed thinks that newspapers provide very good training for new reporters as they need to sharpen their accuracy and writing skills. Another mentions that online news portals are not that challenging because news is mostly collected from websites, not actual field reporting. However, a few of them enjoy working for television because of its reach and the influence it has on its audience (see figure 18).

In terms of newsroom positions, university respondents prefer working as news reporters (52.3%), copy-editor/sub-editors (35.5%), feature writers (31.2%), and radio/TV newscasters (30.3%). The least popular newsroom positions are video persons (7.03%) and graphic designers (9.48%). Private university respondents prefer positions as news reporters (65.2%), feature writers (33.3%), and photo journalists (29.6%). Public university respondents, on the other hand, prefer the jobs of copy editor/sub-editor (43.8%), news reporter (43.2%), and TV/radio newscaster (37.0%) (see figure 19).

The Likert rating scale shows that sports (3.57), crime and law (3.54), environment (3.41), foreign relations (3.41), and education (3.34) are most popular beats for aspiring journalists while the least popular news beats include business and economy (2.74), public health (2.90), lifestyle and culture (2.94), and science and technology (2.94) (see figure 20).

Regarding traditional journalism skills, university respondents view themselves most positively in terms of being able to find own stories (3.75) and language use (3.75); least positively for photojournalism (3.23) and photography (3.33).<sup>11</sup>

In terms of new journalism skills, university respondents perceive themselves to be good in user generated content (3.53) and assembling news packages (3.30).<sup>12</sup>

For specialized journalism skill sets, university respondents evaluate themselves satisfactorily for code of ethics in journalism (3.42), media law, (3.34) and environmental journalism (3.32) and give themselves the lowest mean ratings for data journalism (2.90), religious reporting (2.94), and science reporting (2.99).<sup>13</sup>

The university respondents' assessments of their traditional, new, and specialized skill sets seem to coincide with curriculum map coverage of the selected universities. In its curriculum, DU covers 24 of the 32 listed traditional, new, and spe-

<sup>11</sup> See appendix, figure A12: Respondents' self-reflection on their traditional journalism skill set, p. 56.

<sup>12</sup> See appendix, figure A13: Respondents' self-reflection on their new journalism skill set, p. 57.

<sup>13</sup> See appendix, figure A14: Respondents' self-reflection on their specialized journalism skill set, p. 57.

cialized journalism skills. Stamford follows, covering 23; DIU with 22; JU with 21; and ULAB also with 21. The lowest is JNU, which covers only 12 skill sets—six traditional, two new and four specialized.

A different picture emerges when it comes to the number of skills sets moderately to highly covered in a curriculum. BRUR, CU and DIU have the highest number of moderately to highly-covered skill sets in their curricula. DU only covers five skill sets; DIU 6 skill sets and ULAB 4 skill sets. JU does not cover any skill sets intensively.<sup>14</sup>

#### 4.4 Leaks due to gender issues

The profile of university respondents clearly indicates a gender imbalance with 72.48% male and 27.52% female. This figure is close to the respondents' own perception of gender distribution: 87 percent of them observe a greater proportion of men in their department and only one percent believes the opposite. Four-fifths (81.65%) of the respondents think that women face greater obstacles than men in pursuing a journalism career in Bangladesh (see figure 21).

Respondents agree that the obstacles are due to the job safety issue (4.31), lack of family support (4.11), social norms (3.88), religious norms (3.87), and field work required in the profession (3.81) (see figure 22).

<sup>14</sup> See appendix, figure A15: Number of skills covered in the curriculum of selected universities, p. 58.

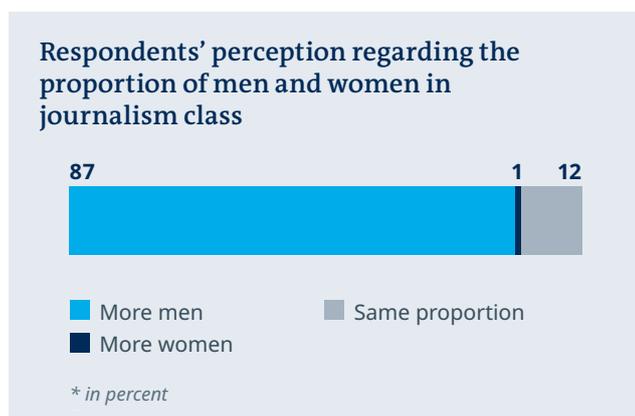


Figure 21 Source: Own research.

One new journalist, Abdullah Al Nayeem, trainee reporter of The Daily Star, explains that

“ Women face a lot of hassles when they go out for assignments. In Bangladesh, traveling using public transport is a hassle. They also face problems in communication as most of the organizers of events are male. They also face problems in-house — still the media houses in our country are not women-friendly.

Another new journalist, Rifat Rahman Bhuiyan, Reporter of bdnews24.com observes that

“ women have less security when reporting in the field. They are teased and this puts them in difficulties.

One female new journalist, Tasmia Naziba, newsroom editor and presenter of Radio Today 98.6 reports that

“ initially, my family disagreed to let me choose the journalism profession. They did not like that my duty kept on shifting — sometimes having evening or night duties. But now, they are used to it.

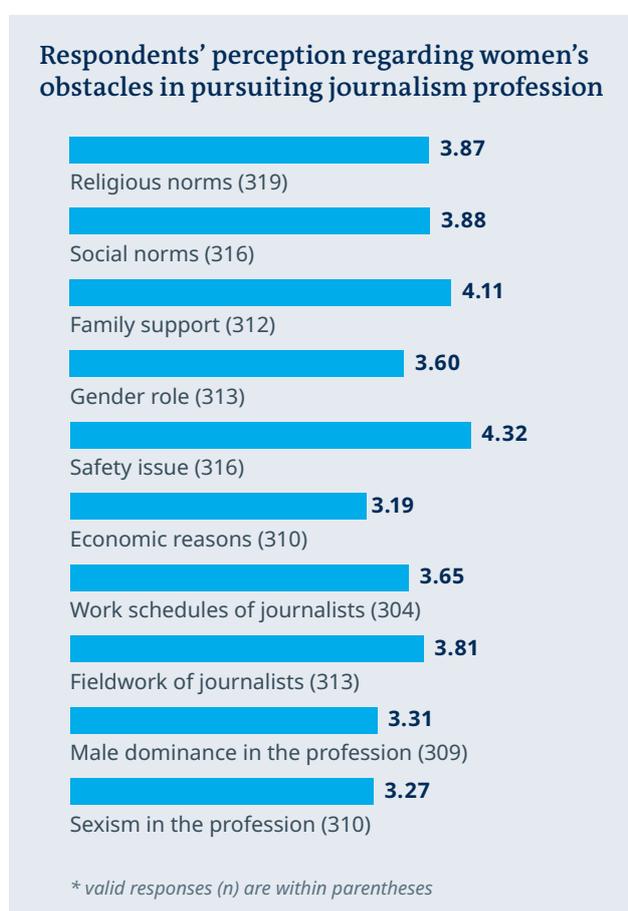


Figure 22 Source: Own research.

Another new female journalist, Fahmida Islam, news producer of Bangladesh Television mentions that

“ families mostly and many women themselves prefer to be in a traditional job for women. Journalism is not a traditional job for women. That is why there are comparatively less women in the sector.

In the interviews with media houses, respondents mention that there are more men in their organization than women. The imbalance can even extend to 90:10 in favor of men. There are a few areas of journalism where women have made some inroads, like news reading, news editing, and online journalism. In reporting, female journalists are usually given soft beats, e.g., the women and children beat.

University respondents believe that the following newsroom positions are suitable for women: TV/Radio newscaster (4.60), feature writer (4.40), and copy editor/sub-editor (4.06). Less suitable are video camera person (2.34) and photo journalist (2.95) (see figure 23).



Figure 23 Source: Own research.

One new journalist of a daily newspaper mentions that Bangladeshi women are not used to using technical devices like video cameras:

“ I do not think that a woman can handle a video camera as it is too heavy.

Another new journalist of another newspaper thinks that

“ the positions of photojournalists and video camera persons are very risky for women because they will be more exposed to the possibilities of sexual and physical assaults.

In terms of reporting, university respondents perceive the following news beats to be most suitable for women: lifestyle and culture (4.34), showbiz/entertainment (4.33), and education (4.17) (see figure 24). They also agree that the following news beats are least suitable for them: crime and law (2.45) and politics (2.50).

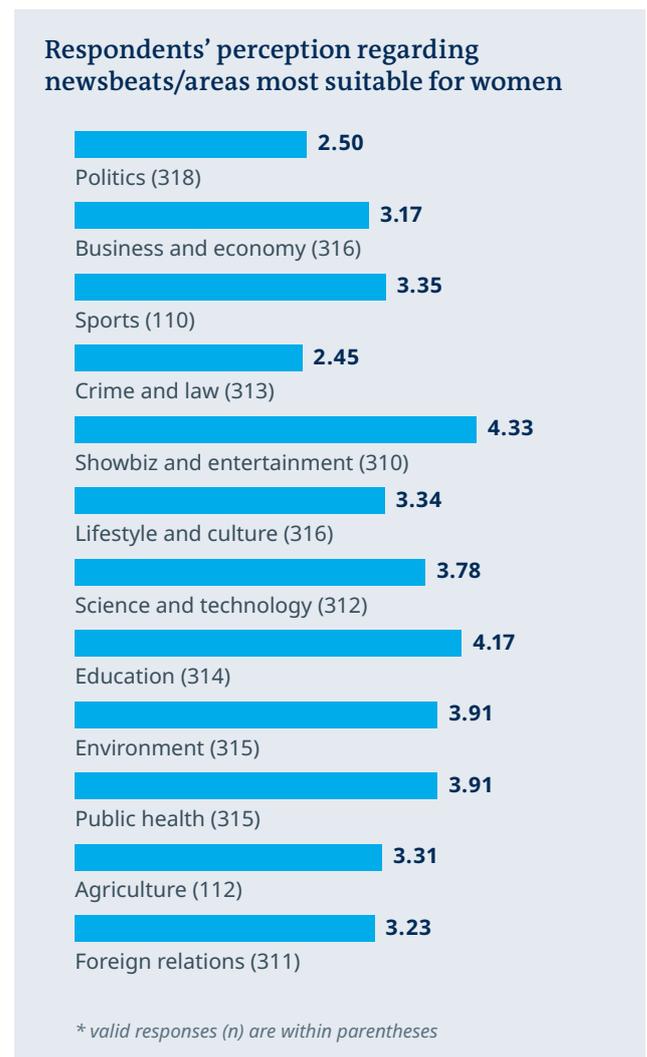


Figure 24 Source: Own research.

“ I think that all beats are suitable for a female journalist except for politics and crime and law. For these two beats, support from the media house is needed,

says one new journalist. A few new journalists mention that the agriculture beat is not appropriate for women because it requires extensive traveling, which women will find hard to do.

It should be noted that many female journalists do not stay long in the profession. This may be due to family pressure (after marriage and/or after having a child) and/or due to lack of support at work. Ziaul Haq Swapan, chief news editor of The Daily Star, observes that

“ women do not stay long in the profession because of their personal or family choices. They go for other professions or stay at home as housewives.

Another media house respondent, Md. Enamul Haque, Head of News of Radio Today FM 89.6 says that balancing time between work and family is a major challenge for female journalists. He says this is especially true when they are assigned the night shift, and their families do not understand and cooperate.

One new female journalist admits that she does not plan to stay in the profession for long, preferring to leave the job once she gets married.

Sometimes, women journalists also lack support at work. One media house respondent, Channel i chief news editor M. Zahid Newaz Khan, states that at times, the section chiefs are reluctant to hire or promote females. They think that women cannot be sent on assignments at night, and that they need to be home by 6:00 pm. They also cannot work 24/7, he adds. During recruitment, female applicants are often asked whether they can work at night. Khan guesses that the applicant must give a persuasive answer to get the job.

He adds, aside from the difficulty of being recruited, female journalists face

“ a glass ceiling. Some bosses think that women cannot do certain things. That male colleagues will not respect their leadership and authority. That they need more leaves from the office,

All media house respondents mention that there are no special policies for female employees, except for maternity leave.

There are a number of studies that support the observations of media house respondents regarding the challenges of women journalists. The challenges may be summarized as follows:

First, women are outnumbered in the journalism profession. Sultana (2006) says that representation of women in the profession is very low, since only six percent of media employees in the country are female. The male to female ratio is 5:1 at the entry level. In 2004, The Bangladesh Centre for Development Journalism and Communication (BCDJC) observes that there are only 174 women journalists employed in media institutions in the country (BCDJC, 2004). Of these, 58 are reporters while 107 work from the office.

Second, women are undermined by their male colleagues. Women are not given decision-making authority. Akhter and Shahriar (2005) report that the male-female ratio at the decision-making level in print media is 85:15. Aktar's (2015) study notes that women only have top newsroom positions at two television stations in the country. Female journalists in the television newsroom she studies reveal that they have a lack of decision-making authority, are undermined by their bosses, and have lost faith in hard work and diligence to move ahead in their careers.

Third, women only get to cover soft beats. Sultana (2006) says that female journalists felt discriminated against in assignment distribution based on news value, credit, challenge and exposure, and promotion compared to their male colleagues. Moreover, female journalists and photographers do not get to cover women-related news stories. Genilo, Quarmal, and Hossain (2018) report that females are relatively voiceless, even in news stories about women, for example International Women's Day. In these stories, more male reporters covered the events, more male sources were cited, and more male photographers took the pictures.

Fourth, women do not stay long in the profession. Akhter and Huq (2005) write that 57 percent of women leave the job before the third year begins. Less than 25 percent of women work in the industry for more than five years. The most common reasons for leaving are exploring better paying jobs, job security, family responsibility, limited scope for promotion, lack of communication with management, and the male self-centered work environment.

## 4.5 Joining the journalism profession

As mentioned in the chapter about methodology, this study focuses on a number of media outlets to learn about the factors affecting aspiring journalists' entry into the profession. The profiles of these media outlets are presented in figure 25. Towhiduzzaman (2015) shows the average monthly salary, total number of employees, and number of media outlets in the country.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> See appendix, figure A16: Employment, average salary and number of media outlets in Bangladesh (estimated from the 40 largest newspaper companies in the country), p. 58.

The number of new journalists the selected media outlets recruit depends on the type of media and media ownership. Online news portal [bdnews24.com](http://bdnews24.com) hires the fewest per year while Channel i employs the most. Prothom Alo, The Daily Star, and Radio Today take on around 10 to 12 new journalists, while Somoy TV gets less than 10. The state-owned media (BTV and Bangladesh Betar) rely on PSC directives. However, they are able to recruit part-time employees as needed. Around half of the recruits of these selected media outlets have a journalism background (see figure 26 on page 40). The rest come from other disciplines as

the media need people with excellent language skills (from Bangla and English literature graduates) and with an understanding of specialized types of reporting (business, economics, social science, science, and international relations).<sup>16</sup>

Media houses hire journalism graduates to do most journalism-related jobs. However, they also hire graduates from other disciplines for specialized tasks such as business reporting, sub-editing, international reporting, etc.

### General profile of media outlets selected in the study

	TYPE	OWNER	DESCRIPTION
<b>Prothom Alo</b> 	Daily newspaper	Transcom Group	Largest circulated Bengali daily newspaper in the country
<b>The Daily Star</b> 	Daily newspaper	Transcom Group	Largest circulated English-language daily newspaper in the country
<b>Bangladesh Betar</b> 	Radio	Ministry of Information	Government-owned radio station
<b>Radio Today</b> 	Radio	Radio Broadcasting FM Company Limited	First private FM radio station in the country—opened in 2006
<b>BTV</b> 	Television	Ministry of Information	Government-owned terrestrial television station
<b>Channel i</b> 	Television	Impress Group	Privately owned commercial satellite television station—opened in October 1999
<b>Somoy TV</b> 	Television	Somoy Media Limited	Privately owned satellite television news channel
<b>bdnews24</b> <a href="http://bdnews24.com">bdnews24.com</a>	Online newspaper	Toufique Imrose Khalidi	First exclusively web-based news agency in the country

Figure 25 Source: Shoesmith and Genilo, 2013 and various internet sources.

<sup>16</sup> See appendix, figure A17: Recruitment requirements and process of select media outlets, p.59.

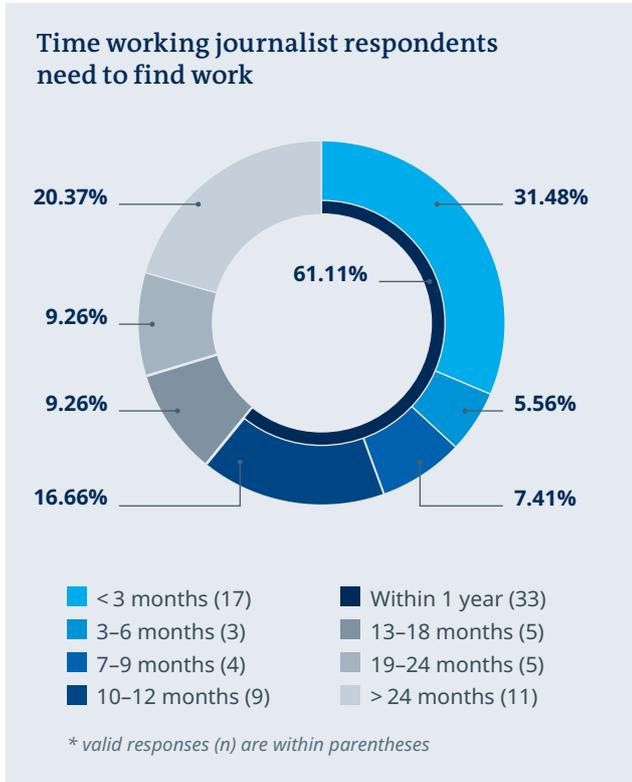


Figure 26 Source: Own research.

The recruitment process of the selected media outlets includes preliminary interviews, written examinations, portfolio reviews, and panel interviews. For broadcast media, there are additional voice tests and/or screen tests. However, there are other ways of recruitment. Three of the new journalists interviewed in the study were recruited immediately after their internship. Another new journalist explains that he was taken in after serving as an apprentice reporter. One admits that she had personal connections with the company, which helped in her hiring. Figure 27 shows the recruitment experiences of university respondents, particularly those who are already working.

In general, university respondents did not have a very hard time getting a job in the industry, because the industry is growing. Around one-third of respondents needed less than three months to find a job in the media sector. Around 61.11 percent of respondents found a job within a year.

#### 4.6 Progression in the journalism profession

Once the aspiring journalists are recruited, the media houses immediately start to work on improving their journalism skills. According to one interviewee, "Journalism education still centers around printed news" and this no longer reflects what the sector is facing at present. The respondents see these major changes in the industry:

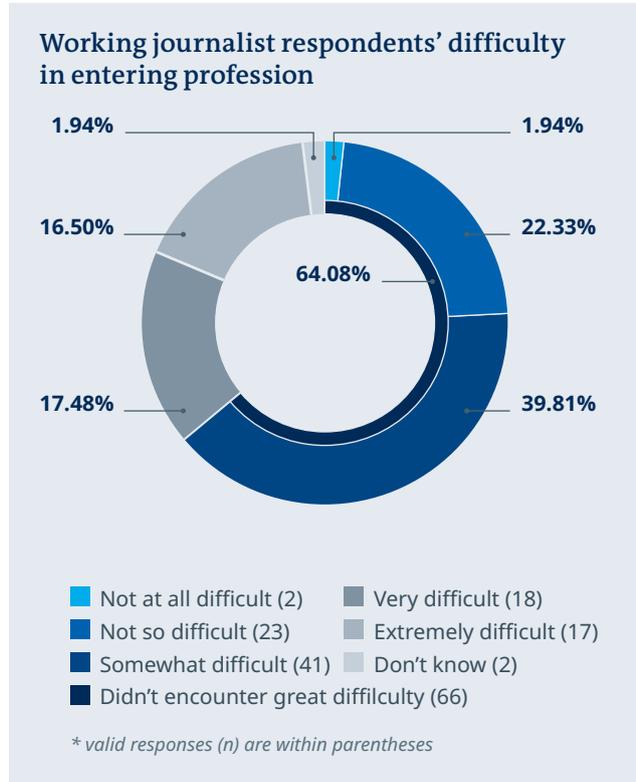


Figure 27 Source: Own research.

- Media is now digital. As a result, journalists need to write on multi-platforms and learn multiple production skills.
- News is now a 24/7 activity. It needs to be updated instantly. It can be delivered in a myriad of ways. It can be a live experience—delivered via mobile phone.
- The audience has greater influence on the media. They can give immediate feedback. They no longer believe whatever they hear over the media. They have their opinions.
- The audience can generate their own content online. They can compete with the established media.
- The business and financial structure of the media has changed a lot. Survival and sustainability have become important concerns.

#### 4.6.1 Skills of new journalists

Media house respondents list various skills and topics that they feel need to be taught in journalism schools. These were tabulated and are presented in the tag cloud (figure 28).

The skills and topics mentioned most include editing, AV production, writing skills, news sense, mobile journalism, online journalism, multi-platform writing, news gathering, fact checking/verification, speaking, and digital technology (see figure 29).

### Media house respondents' perception on skills and topics needed to be taught in journalism schools



Figure 28 Source: Own research.

### Extent of coverage of traditional, new and specialized skills in journalism curriculum of both private and public universities



Figure 29 Source: Own research.

For comparison, the traditional, new, and specialized skill sets covered in the curricula of both private and public universities (presented in figures 28 and 29) were also converted into a tag cloud.

In the curricula and in the figure above, the most prominent skill sets are news writing, interviewing, language use, video skills, finding own stories, computer, basic sub-editing, environmental journalism, business journalism, code of ethics, and writing for multi-platforms. Private universities also emphasized using web statistics and health and safety, while public universities stressed knowledge of the right to information act, copyright law, and media law. What is missing in the tag cloud of universities are skills on mobile journalism, fact checking/verification, online journalism, live reporting, speaking skills, and event journalism.

With the exception of Bangladesh Betar and bdnews24.com, media house respondents find that new journalists only have very basic skills. This extends to traditional, new, and specialized skills. Bangladesh Betar and bdnews24.com respondents, in contrast, believe that new journalists already have good skills in feature writing, time management, video skills, assembling

news bulletins, and remote working. Channel i and Radio Today respondents agree with them for time management skills only.

Based on the study findings we can argue that the curricula of educational institutions partially cover the skills sets required by media outlets. Although the curricula touch on several traditional and specialized skills sets, there are still areas not covered.

#### 4.6.2 Trainings in media houses

Most media houses have devised in-house trainings for their new recruits as illustrated in figure 30 (page 42).

In-house trainings consist of orientation programs, short trainings, mentorships, and on-the-job trainings. The short trainings center on data journalism, basic writing, interviewing, communicating, practicing editing and camera work, writing for multi-media platforms, etc. In addition to in-house trainings, new journalists are sent to journalism training institutes, such as NIMC, PIB, and BIJEM.

## Types of in-house training and human resource policies of selected media houses

	TYPES OF IN-HOUSE TRAINING	HUMAN RESOURCE POLICIES
<b>Prothom Alo</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Orientation program</li> <li>- Short basic trainings mentorship (for 2 weeks)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wage board</li> <li>- Code of conduct</li> <li>- Yearly performance assessment</li> <li>- No written HR policy on promotion</li> </ul>
<b>The Daily Star</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Short trainings (data journalism and different journalism areas)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 6-24 months probation period, performance based promotion</li> <li>Ranks: trainee, reporter, senior reporter, special correspondent, senior posts</li> <li>- No written code of conduct</li> </ul>
<b>Bangladesh Betar</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Short trainings (voice, pronunciation, English language skills and current events)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotion based on government rules</li> <li>- No written code of conduct</li> </ul>
<b>Radio Today</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Short trainings with Voice of America (news writing)</li> <li>- On-the-job training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 6 months probation period</li> <li>- Promotion on 2 years of satisfactory performance, recommended by a 3-member panel</li> <li>- No written HR policy, no code of conduct</li> </ul>
<b>BTV</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No regular training</li> <li>- NIMC courses (for new staffs)</li> <li>- On-the-job training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotion based on government rules</li> <li>- No written code of conduct</li> </ul>
<b>Channel i</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Orientation program (ethics, history, culture and tradition, international issues and practical matters such as reporting, camera work, interviewing and writing for multi-media platform)</li> <li>- Special training (online journalis)</li> <li>- Mentorship (for event coverage)</li> <li>- Skills development courses (for new staffs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 12 months probation period, promotion on 4 years of satisfactory performance</li> <li>Ranks: junior reporter, reporter, senior reporter and special correspondents</li> <li>Ranks (desk): newsroom editor, senior newsroom editor, joint news editor and news editor</li> <li>- Written code of conduct</li> </ul>
<b>Somoy TV</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No in-house trainings</li> <li>- Skills development courses (for new staffs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3-6 months probation period</li> <li>- No written HR policy on regulation and promotion, no code of conduct</li> </ul>
<b>bdnews24</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On-the-job training (no formal trainings)</li> <li>- Orientation program (for new journalists at planning stage)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Editorial decision on regularization and promotion</li> <li>Ranks: apprentice, reporter, chief reporter, asst. news editor, chief news editor</li> <li>- Written code of ethics</li> </ul>

Figure 30 Source: Own research.

Media outlets have limited capacities to train newly recruited journalists. Of the eight media outlets, only three have regular orientation programs and two have skill development courses. The rest undertake special trainings from time to time. A few outlets rely on mentorships and on-the-job trainings.

### 4.6.3 Training at institutes

The oldest institute is PIB. It also has the largest academic staff. The second oldest is NIMC, which has the greatest number of students per year. BIJEM is a privately-owned institute, which is only 15 years old. Most of its lecturers are part-time. Among the three, only PIB offers a post-graduate diploma program in journalism. The diploma consists of seven courses that can be completed in ten months. PIB admits only 50 students per year to this program. Aside from this, PIB offered 104 journalism trainings in 2017 for 3,000 to 3,500 journalists. They include short trainings on broadcast journalism and a basic online journalism course. NIMC and BIJEM only have short courses running from two to three months. NIMC has four journalism courses while BIJEM has two.

The short courses at NIMC include radio and television news reporting, modern broadcast technology, techniques of news presentation, and capacity building for community radio. At BIJEM, the two short courses are TV news reporting and basic journalism. These Institutes have no co-curricular and extra-curricular programs.

The institutes have set up their own media laboratories and purchased appropriate equipment to run their programs. They focus on enhancing practical traditional journalism skills.<sup>17</sup>

### 4.6.4 Assessment of institute respondents on their training

Institute respondents in the survey are generally older than university respondents. They are mostly 26 years old and older. Most of them come from semi-urban and rural areas and from a low-income status. Two-thirds of respondents are single and almost all are male. None of the institute respondents have a journalism background. Instead, they studied English literature, business, science, and other majors in their undergraduate programs. They enrolled in the institutes to learn journalism skills and earn necessary credentials.<sup>18</sup>

The institute respondents are generally satisfied with their overall journalism education experience. They are highly satisfied with the curriculum (4.48), quality of the faculty (4.43), teaching and learning (4.29), and resource materials (4.24). They are least happy with the research opportunities (3.67) and facilities (3.79).<sup>19</sup>

Institute respondents give themselves high ratings on the following skills sets: finding own stories, language use, news gathering, interviewing, and media law. They grade themselves lowest in moderating user comments (3.05), blogging (3.14), data journalism (3.14), basic photography (3.19), remote working (3.25), feature writing (3.30), and writing for search engine optimization (3.38).<sup>20</sup>

### 4.7 Human resource policies in media houses

Most media houses have no written human resource policies on regularization and promotion. Regularization is the process where an employee moves from probationary to permanent status. It takes from as short as three months (Somoy TV) to as long as two years (The Daily Star). For promotion, some media houses use a panel (Radio Today) while others solely rely on the editor (bdnews24.com). Promotion depends on performance and can take up to four years. The media houses also have clear hierarchies among reporters and desk editors. One media house (The Daily Prothom Alo) stresses that it follows the Wage Board regulations. The state-owned media strictly follow government rules.

Only two media houses have a written code of conduct—The Daily Prothom Alo and Channel i. The latter plans to extend the code to social media practice. The Daily Star issues newsletters in lieu of a code of conduct. It emphasizes honesty and integrity.

Because of the unclear human resource policies, most of the aspiring journalists think their prospects of a career in journalism are poor. 69.15 percent of the university respondents perceive very poor to fair journalism career prospects. Similarly, 52 percent of institute respondents perceive very poor to fair journalism career prospects.<sup>21</sup>

New journalists mention job insecurity, a low salary and low incentives as reasons for their pessimism regarding journalism careers in Bangladesh.

<sup>17</sup> See appendix, figure A18: Journalism programs in institutes, p. 60.

<sup>18</sup> See appendix, figure A19: Socio-demographic profile of institute respondents, p. 61.

<sup>19</sup> See appendix, figure A20: Institute respondents' assessment on their journalism education, p. 61.

<sup>20</sup> See appendix, figure A21: Institute respondents' self-reflection on their different skill sets, p. 62.

<sup>21</sup> See appendix, figure A22: Perception of university respondents on journalism career prospects, p. 63.

One of them explains that

“ there is no pattern or standard regarding salaries of journalists. It depends on media houses.

Another adds that

“ only a handful of media houses provide good and regular salaries. Most of them do not and journalists then struggle to lead a good life.

“ Due to these factors, new journalists are switching to other professions,

one interviewee admits.

“ They are not sincere in doing their jobs.

One aspiring journalist says she plans to move to public service.

The data from the survey and interviews lead the researchers to argue that the lack of standardized human resource policies in media outlets (particularly regarding codes of ethics, minimum wage, job security, and promotion) discourages new and aspiring journalists pursuing a career in the profession. Although they don't see financial benefits as the main reason to enter the profession, the aspiring journalists need adequate wages and job security. Of the eight media houses, only one says it sticks to the set minimum wage. The two government-owned media have set rules, but the rest do not have written human resource policies. Only two media houses have a written code of conduct. Given this, 69.15 percent of the university respondents see poor to fair journalism career prospects.



## 5. Conclusion and recommendations

## 5.1 Conclusions

This study aimed to identify the factors that facilitate or inhibit new and aspiring journalists in Bangladesh to prepare for and join the profession. It also sought to determine the factors that would enable or restrict them from acquiring the necessary skill sets (particularly in educational institutions and media outlets) to succeed in professional journalism. Moreover, it identified the institutional policies and practices that demotivate new and aspiring journalism from continuing in the profession.

To fulfill the objectives, the study utilized the leaky pipeline model Berryman (1983:47) introduced, wherein a cohort enters an academic institution to complete a degree, but loses members as it progresses through the pipeline. In her study, she identifies two types of factors that bring about the leakage of cohort members: socio-cultural factors and institutional factors. The former includes the individual's race, gender, and ethnic group. The latter concern the type of school, school requirements, school funding, etc.

The survey results show that there is a large interest among young people to study journalism. This coincides with industry demands for quality young professionals. This research finds that young people's primary motivation to study journalism is idealistic. They see it as an opportunity to make societal impacts. However, only half of the students are actually interested in a career in journalism, and around 70 percent of the students see the prospects of a career in journalism in Bangladesh as poor or fair. This research attempted to answer the question just why the highly motivated and inspired young people were demotivated from seeking out a career in journalism.

This study finds that among the socio-cultural factors, lack of family support and gender inequality of women contribute to leakage of journalism students towards the profession. Although 67.89 percent of the students have the support of their families to enroll at journalism schools, only 38.84 percent receive financial supports from the families. Regarding gender, the number of males far outweighs females in journalism programs. Four-fifths of university respondents believe that women face greater obstacles than men in pursuing a journalism career.

With regards to institutional factors, the study looked into both educational institutes and media houses. It assumed that two factors lead to the loss of cohort members due to educational institution effects, i.e., the lack of mechanisms to integrate graduates into the workplace and inadequate development of skills by educational institutions. The study findings provide evidence that educational institutions have limited mechanisms to integrate their graduates into media organizations and that these mechanisms can be further improved. The educational institutions also cover much of the traditional journalism skill set in their curriculum, but much is left to be desired for new and specialized media skills.

For the institutional factors linked to the media houses, this study finds that major media companies recruit half of their new employees from graduates with journalism degrees. They expect these graduates to have traditional, new, and specialized journalism skills. Those who do not possess such skills are not hired. Media organizations recruit graduates from other disciplines for some specialized skills like language, business, and international relations.

Although some of the major media companies have orientation and training programs, they are too limited in scope for a proper integration of newly recruited young journalists.

Poor and irregular salaries are other factors that keep many aspiring young journalists from joining the media or continuing in the profession. There are no standardized hiring and promotion policies in most media houses. And only a small number of media companies follows the government-designed pay scales for journalists. One of the effects the survey results show is that more than half of the students are interested in careers in public services and public relations, rather than journalism.

Taking these conclusions into account, this study puts forward the leaky pipeline situation of new and aspiring journalists in Bangladesh as follows:

Before aspiring journalists even enter the pipeline, some are pressured to drop out due to gender bias and lack of family support. Those who complete their education need to clear some hurdles to enter the journalism profession. Factors that keep them out of professional journalism include the lack of skills (due to the skill set coverage of educational institutions), lack of mechanisms to integrate graduates into the workplace, and hiring preferences of media houses. Once in the workplace, the new journalists face problems such as a lack of standardized training programs and codified human resource policies. These factors cause them to drop out of the pipeline and prevent them from becoming career journalists.

## 5.2 Recommendations

The study has the following recommendations:

- **Journalism educators' network:** Journalism schools should strengthen dialogues among themselves on best practices and experiences in journalism education for example by using the network set up by the DW Akademie. This will enable journalism educators to support each other in their efforts to come up with a balanced curriculum—one that acknowledges the importance of the media in democracy as well as the commercial side of the industry. Such a network can also collaborate in investigating the effectiveness of a variety of teaching methods and assessment of learning. This network needs to function in a sustainable way. Older universities with vast experiences should support newer ones through curricula development and working on joint projects.
- **Investment for digital media literacy:** The technological development has immensely influenced the current trends and practices of journalism. Journalism education should address this by initiating efforts so that the aspiring journalists can get optimal level of technological competence for a convergent newsroom. Universities should continue investing in media laboratories, equipment and co-/extra-curricular programs as well as introducing new courses related to new media. Universities should approach private companies and non-profit foundations proactively to gather funds for such investments.
- **Internship:** Internship is the most effective way of creating scopes for aspiring journalists to gain and master professional skills. In journalism a successful internship is the first step toward finding a place in a newsroom. Both public and private universities should develop more structured internships for students in collaboration with the news media industry. The journalism schools can also bring a change in the curricula with the option that students majoring in journalism must have to finish an internship as part of the degree program. Journalism educators and industry professionals can work collaboratively to manage the recruitment and assessment of internees. Journalism schools and media houses should look for third party funding to manage the costs of paid internships. The internship programs should reserve some places for female students in a bid to recruit more females in journalism.
- **Scholarship fund:** Media companies as well as the government, particularly the Ministry of Information may find it useful to set up a scholarship fund for aspiring journalists, male and female. They should create a favourable environment to attract the best talent in the field through fair and competitive salaries, incentives and regularization policies. The media companies should work with universities to explore gender issues in journalism: why there are too few women in the field and why these women do not stay in the profession for long. Media outlets can also improve their internal training and cooperation with academic institutions.
- **Professional connections:** The gap between journalism schools and the industry needs to be minimized. Recruitment of experienced journalists as part-time teachers of practical courses or as guest lecturers will make rooms for professional collaboration. Journalists can team-teach a course together with an academic faculty. This can have mutual benefits – faculty members can learn the tools and trades of practical journalism while the journalists can get knowledge about sociology of news.
- **Alumni networks:** Recruitment in journalism is largely informal and it is a global phenomenon. Journalism schools should effectively involve alumni who are involved in professional journalism in creating a bridge between journalism students and the news media industry.



# Appendix

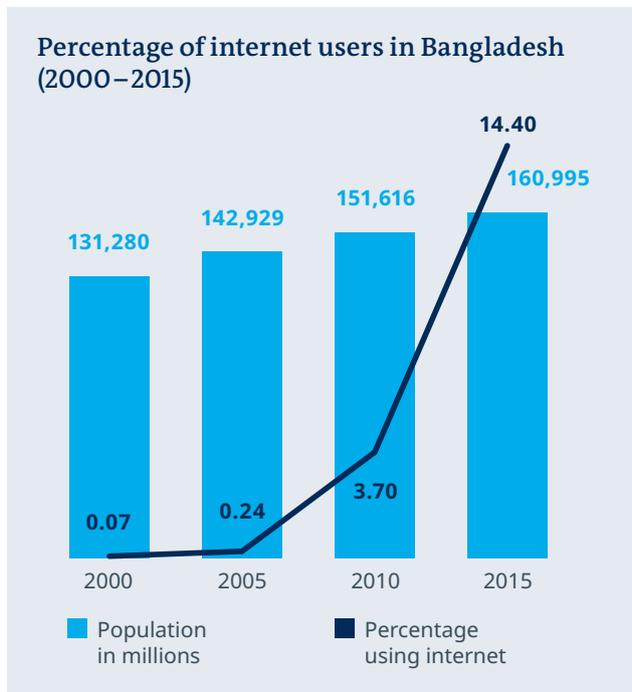


Figure A1 See 1.3 Bangladesh's changing media landscape, p. 12.

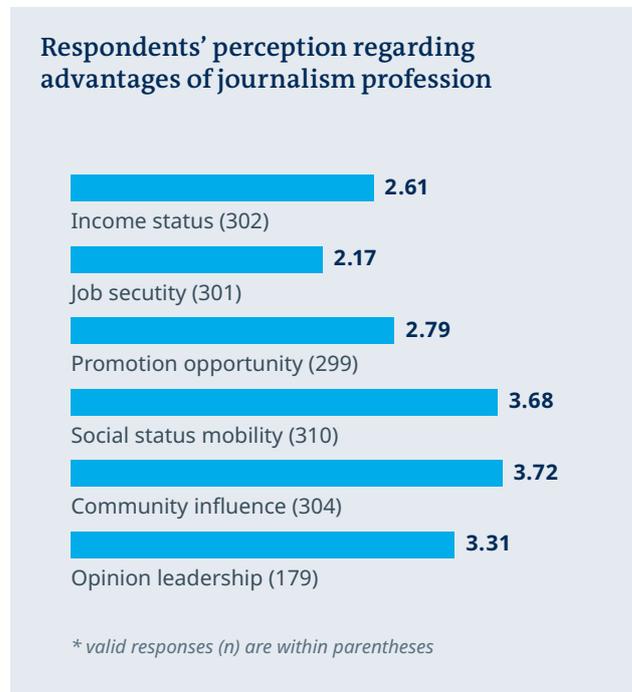


Figure A5 See 4.1 Entering journalism school, p. 28.

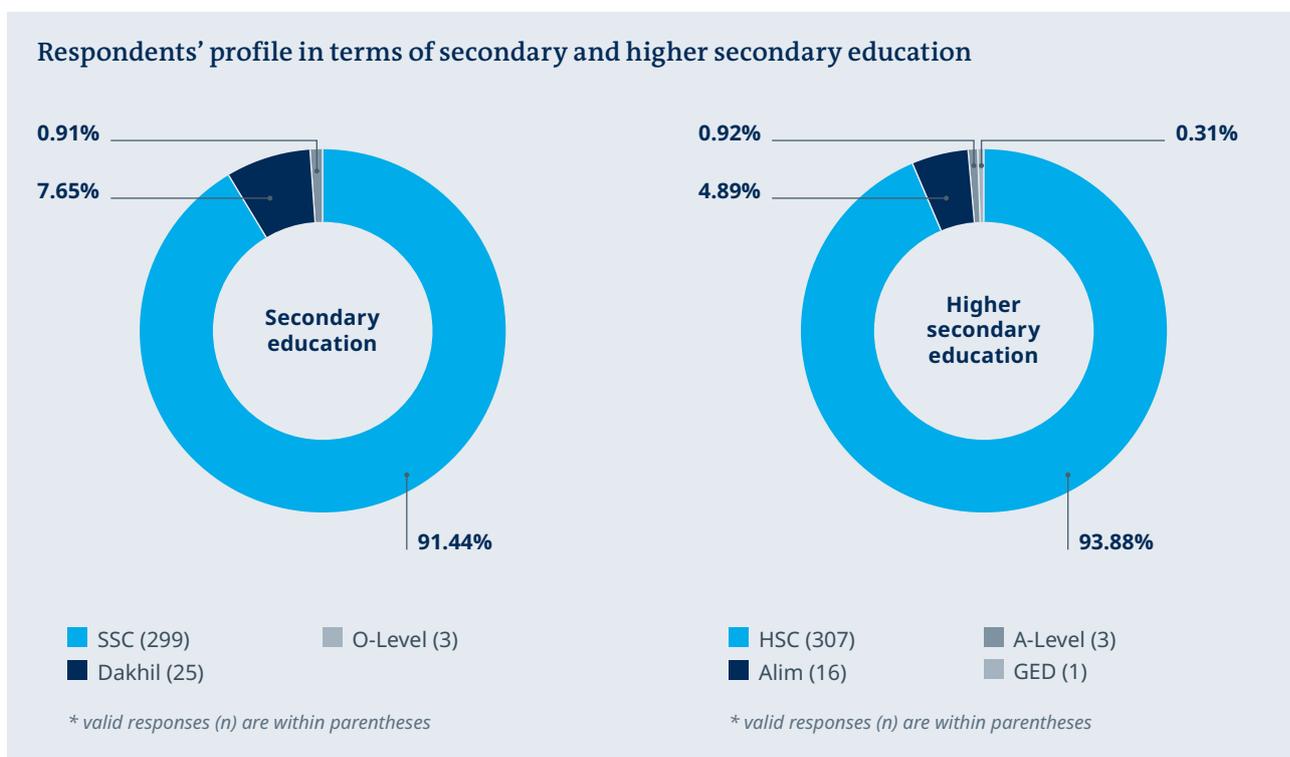


Figure A3 See 4.1 Entering journalism school, p. 27.

### Respondents' profile in terms of age, gender, religion and civil status

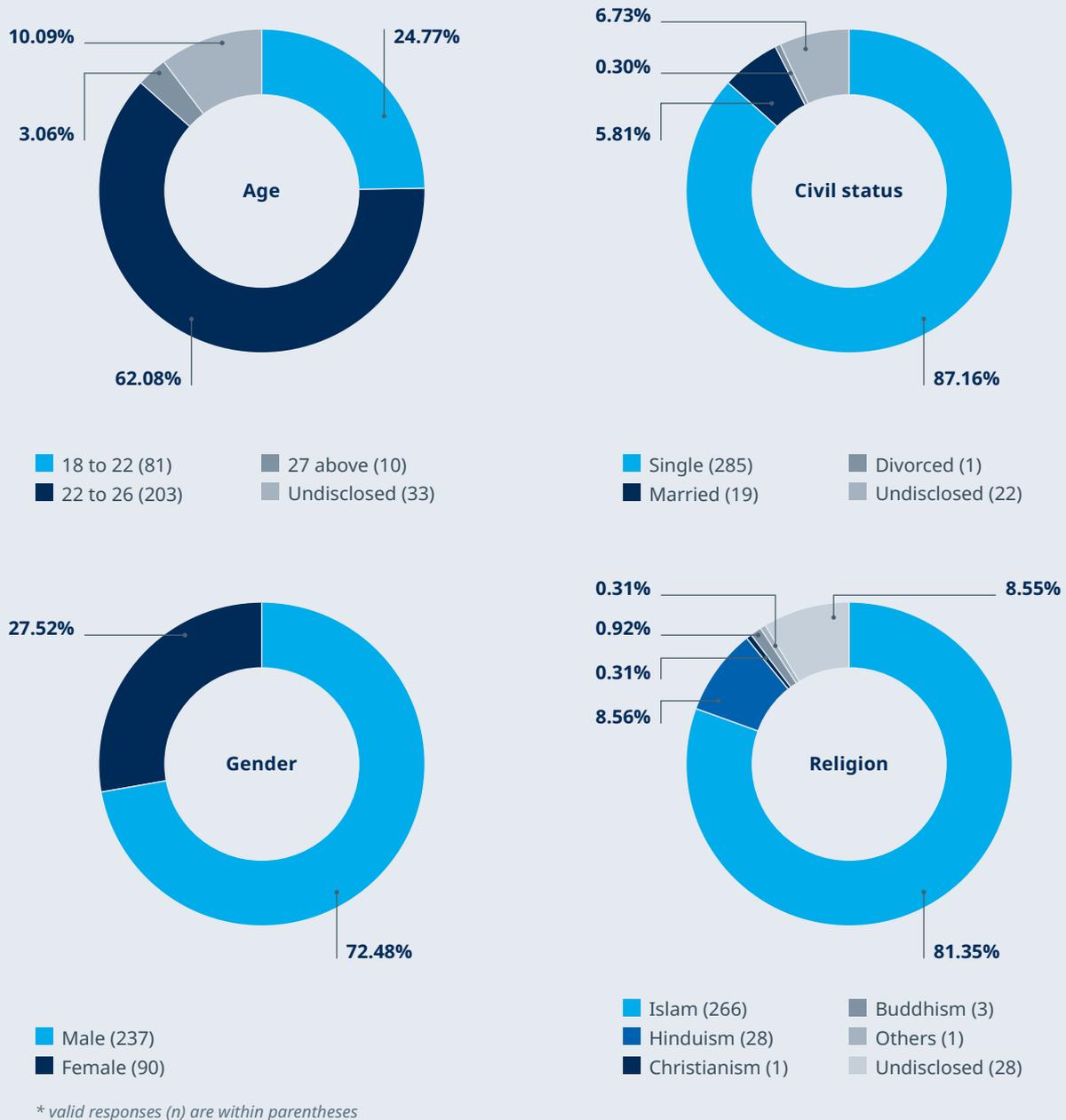
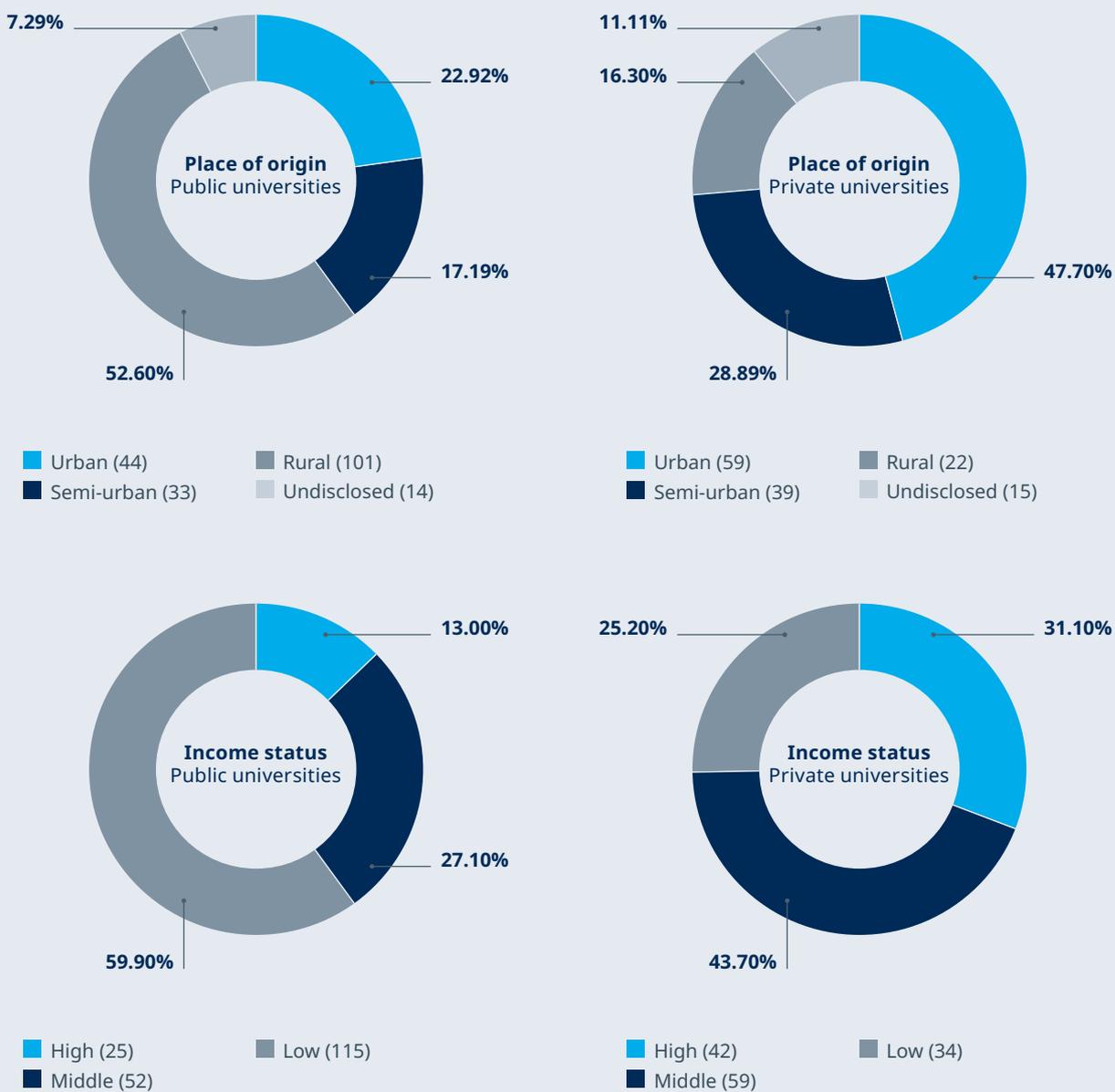


Figure A2 See 4.1 Entering journalism school, p. 27.

Comparative profile of public and private university respondents' in terms of place of origin and income status



\* valid responses (n) are within parentheses

Figure A4 See 4.1 Entering journalism school, p. 27.

### Main discourses in the vision, mission and goal statements of journalism schools



To produce skilled and ethical manpower for the media and communication industry



To create responsible citizens of the country and the world



To instill liberal ideals regarding freedom of expression and freedom of thought



To combat colonized mindsets through media education and innovation

Figure A6 See 4.2 Progression in journalism school, p.30.

### Student-faculty ratio in select journalism programs

UNIVERSITY	RATIO
DU	10:1
CU	18:1
RU	11:1
ULAB	40:1
Stamford	23:1
DIU	45:1

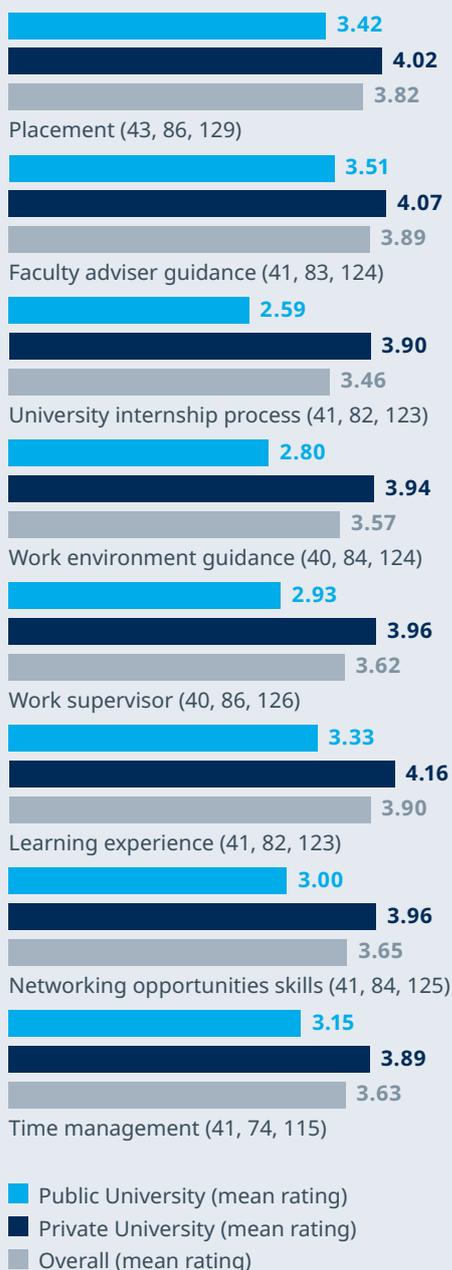
Figure A7 See 4.2 Progression in journalism school, p.31.

### Program assessment of learning utilized select journalism programs

	 DU	 RU	 CU	 JU	 JUN	 BRUR	 ULAB	 Stamford	 Daffodil University
Viva	×	×	×	×	×	×	×		×
Internship	×				×		×	×	×
Report							×		×
Portfolio							×		

Figure A8 See 4.2 Progression in journalism school, p.33.

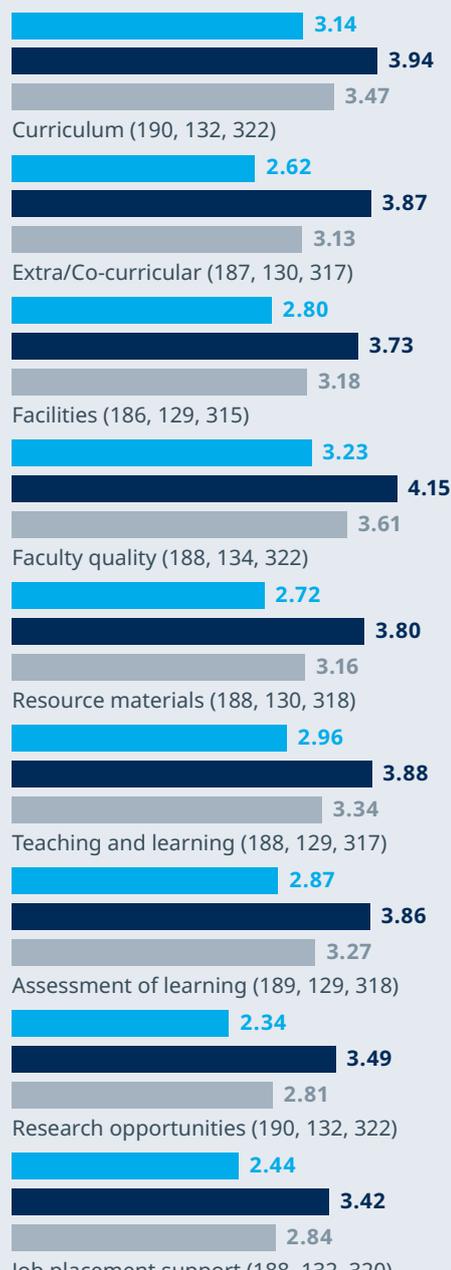
### Respondents' assessment of their internship program



\* valid responses (n) are within parentheses

Figure A9 See 4.2 Progression in journalism school, p.33.

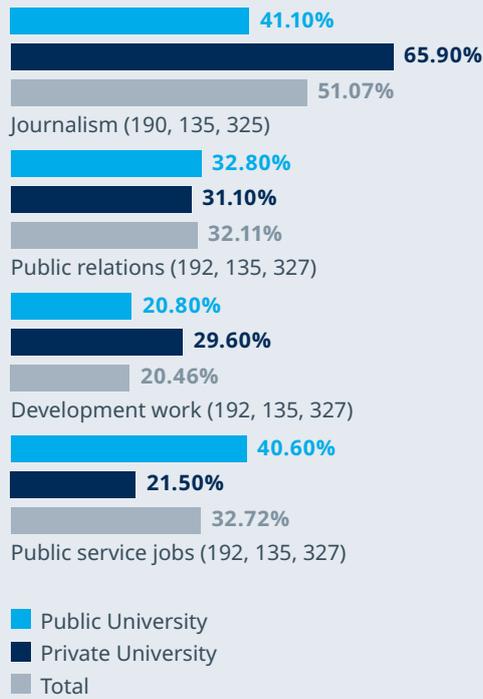
### Respondents' assessment of the standard of journalism education



\* valid responses (n) are within parentheses

Figure A10 See 4.2 Progression in journalism school, p.33.

### Communication-related career options of respondents



\* valid responses (n) are within parentheses

Figure A11 See 4.3 Completion of journalism school, p. 34.

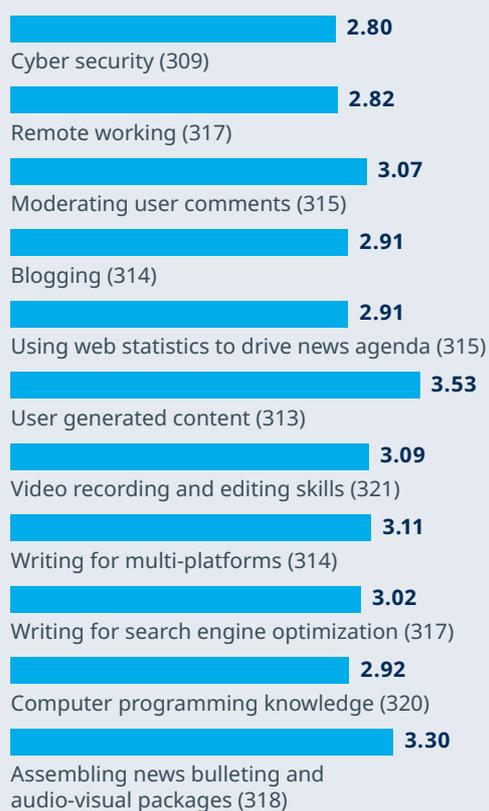
### Respondents' self-reflection on their traditional journalism skill set



\* valid responses (n) are within parentheses

Figure A12 See 4.3 Completion of journalism school, p. 35.

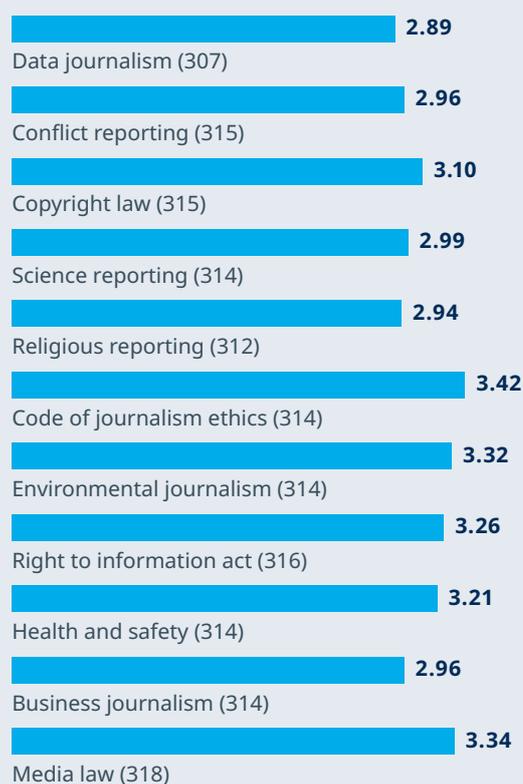
### Respondents' self-reflection on their new journalism skill set



\* valid responses (n) are within parentheses

Figure A13 See 4.3 Completion of journalism school, p. 35.

### Respondents' self-reflection on their specialized journalism skill set



\* valid responses (n) are within parentheses

Figure A14 See 4.3 Completion of journalism school, p. 35.

### Number of skills covered in the curriculum of selected universities

#### Private Universities



University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh



Daffodil International University



Stamford University Bangladesh

#### Dhaka-based Public Universities



Dhaka University



Jahangirnagar University



Jagannath University

#### Public Universities outside Dhaka



Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur



Chittagong University



Rajshahi University

- Traditional journalism
- New journalism
- Specialized journalism

Figure A15 See 4.4 Leaks due to gender issues, p. 36.

### Employment, average salary and number of media outlets in Bangladesh (estimated from the 40 largest newspaper companies in the country)

MEDIA TYPE	NUMBER	TOTAL EMPLOYEES	AVE. MONTHLY SALARY (BDT)
Newspaper (print and online)	292*	11,089	30,000**
Radio	27	2,706	20,000
Television	26	9,802	22,000
Advertising	30	21,450	27,000

Figure A16 Source: Rocky, Towhiduzzaman (2015) after Shoemith and Mahmud (2013). See 4.5 Joining the journalism profession, p. 38.

## Recruitment requirements and process of selected media outlets

	RECRUITMENT PROCESS	NUMBER RECRUITED	EDUCATION REQUIREMENT
<b>Prothom Alo</b> 	Written examination, portfolio review and panel interview	Not more than 10 per year	Journalism (50 percent); others from economics, international relations, sociology, anthropology, bangla and english literature, science
<b>The Daily Star</b> 	Language test, trial period of one-week informal interview	10 to 12 per year	Journalism (50 percent); others from english due to language skills. Business and science for specialized reporting
<b>Bangladesh Betar</b> 	Written examination, formal interview, voice test following PSC policies and procedures	Depends on the decision of the PSC. However, contractual employees may be recruited when necessary	
<b>Radio Today</b> 	Informal interview, voice test, formal interview and portfolio review	10 to 12 per year	Journalism (50 percent); others from social science and business
<b>BTV</b> 	Written examination, formal interview, camera test following PSC policies and procedures	Depends on the decision of the PSC. However, contractual employees may be recruited when necessary. Recruit journalism, english and social science	
<b>Channel i</b> 	Written examination, voice test, news manager interview and top management panel interview	10 to 12 new journalists, 2 mid-level, 3 to 4 camera and video editors per year	Journalism, english, science, social science, business
<b>Somoy TV</b> 	Informal interview, written examination and final interview	Less than 10 per year	Journalism, bangla literature, geography, international relations
<b>bdnews24</b> 	Informal interview, written test and portfolio review	4 to 5 per year	Journalism (50 percent); others from social science, science and business

Figure A17 See 4.5 Joining the journalism profession, p. 39.

## Journalism programs in institutes

	GENERAL PROFILE	CURRICULAR PROFILE	LEARNING FACILITIES
	<p>Established in 1980.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 35 full time academic staffs</li> <li>- 96 non-academic staffs and 425 students/year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 4 short courses (duration: 3 months)</li> </ul>	<p>Internet access, 1 digital lab with 4 digital practical table, 1 radio lab with 3 digital practical table, 1 TV lab with 3 digital practical table, film editing room, 1 TV studio, 1 radio studio, 21 computers with high speed internet connectivity, non-linear video editing, modern office management, audio recording and editing digital photography equipment</p>
	<p>Established in 1976.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 10 full time and 29 part time academic staffs</li> <li>- 108 non-academic staffs and 400 students/year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Post graduate diploma 1 program consisting 7 journalism courses (duration: 10 months)</li> <li>- Various short courses (duration: various)</li> </ul>	<p>PBI doesn't have its own laboratories, but has a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with DIU to access their studio, editing panel and electronic equipment for the student's practical works</p>
	<p>Established in 2003.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 4 full time and 40 part time academic staffs</li> <li>- 7 non-academic staffs and 235 students/year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2 short courses (duration: 2-3 months)</li> </ul>	<p>Computer lab, editing panels, video cameras, still cameras</p>

Figure A18 See 4.6.3 Training at institutes, p. 43.

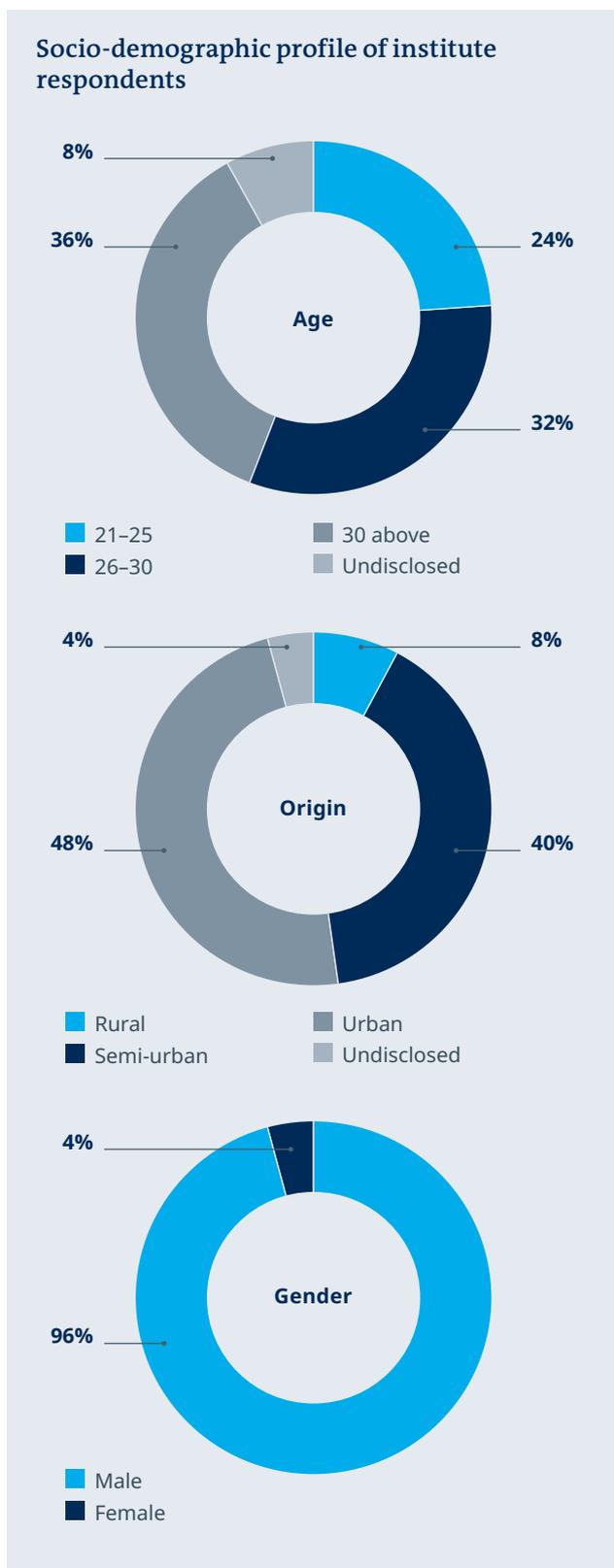
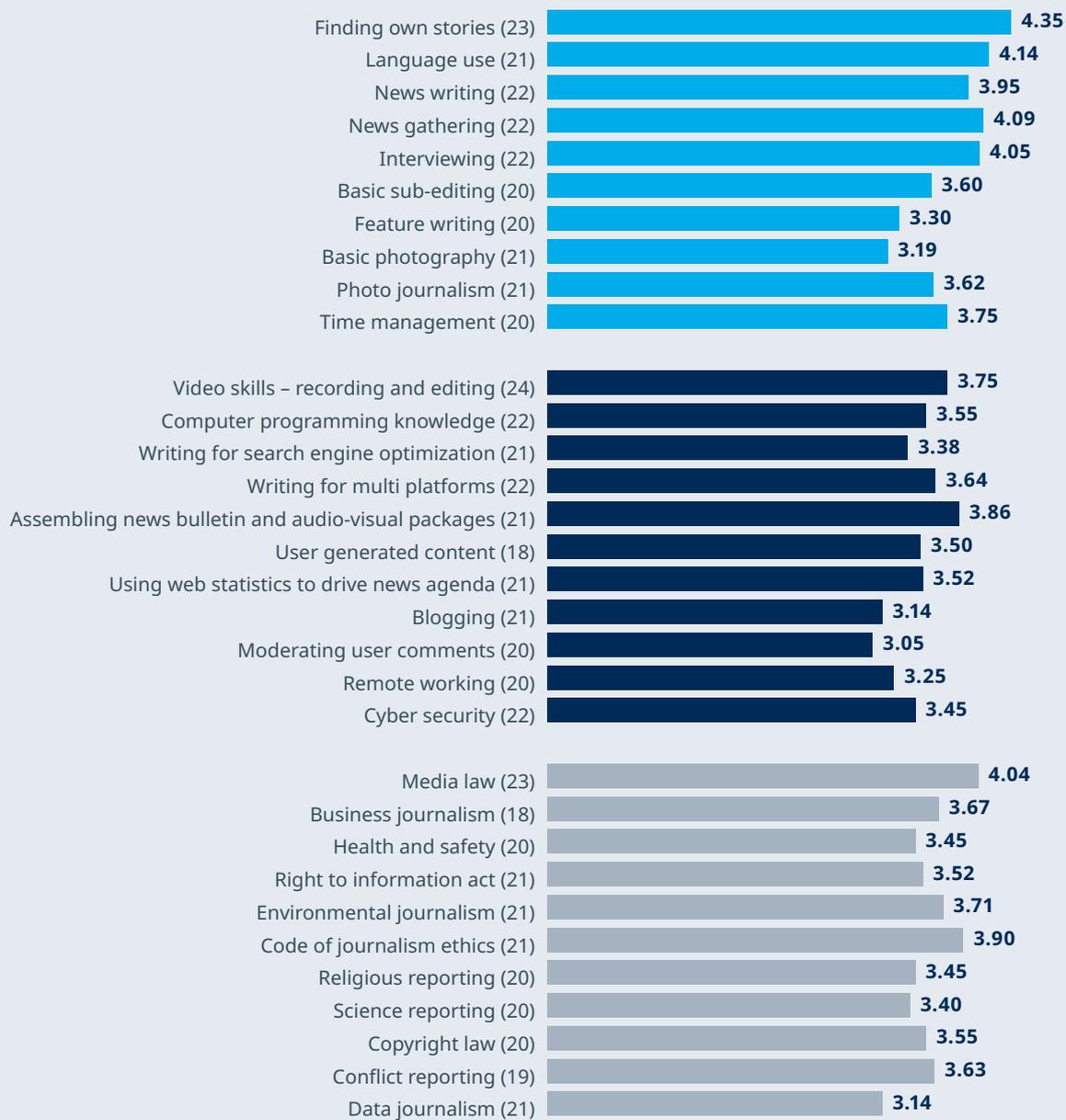


Figure A19 See 4.6.4 Assessment of institute respondents on their training, p. 43.



Figure A20 See 4.6.4 Assessment of institute respondents on their training, p. 43.

### Institute respondents' self-reflection on their different skill sets



■ Traditional skills   ■ News skills   ■ Specialized skills

\* valid responses (n) are within parentheses

Figure A21 See 4.6.4 Assessment of institute respondents on their training, p. 43.

### Perception of university respondents on journalism career prospects

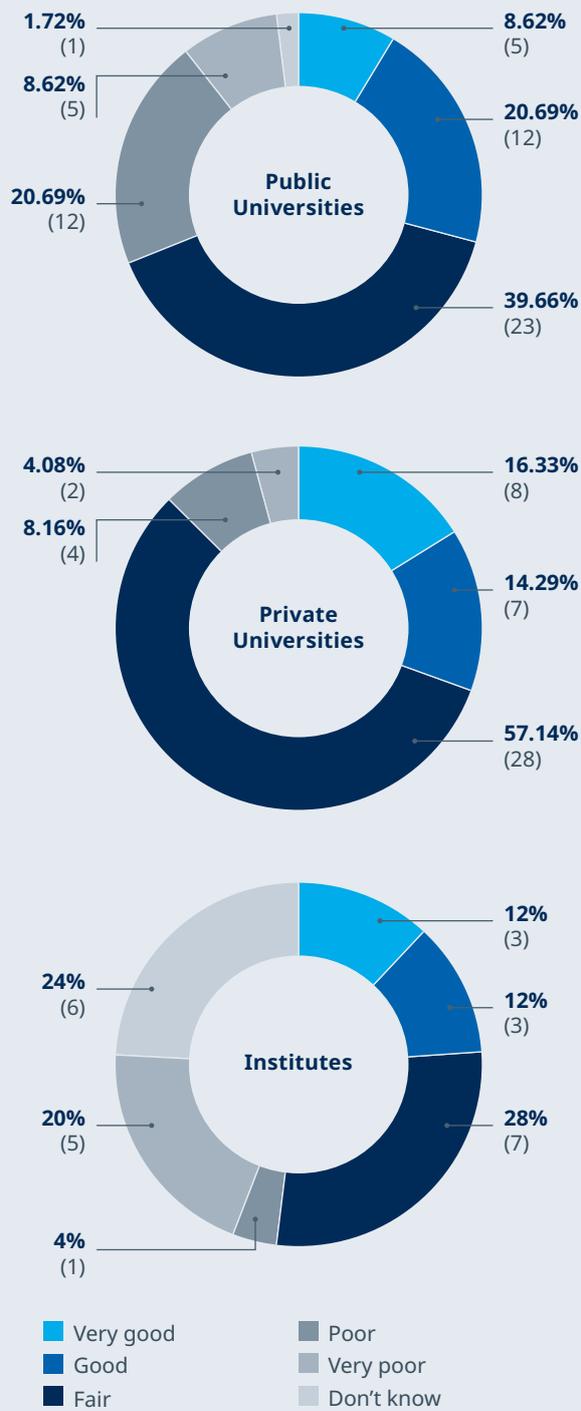


Figure A22 See 4.7 Human resource policies in media houses, p. 43.

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