

Study on Online Violence against Women Journalists

STUDY BRIEF

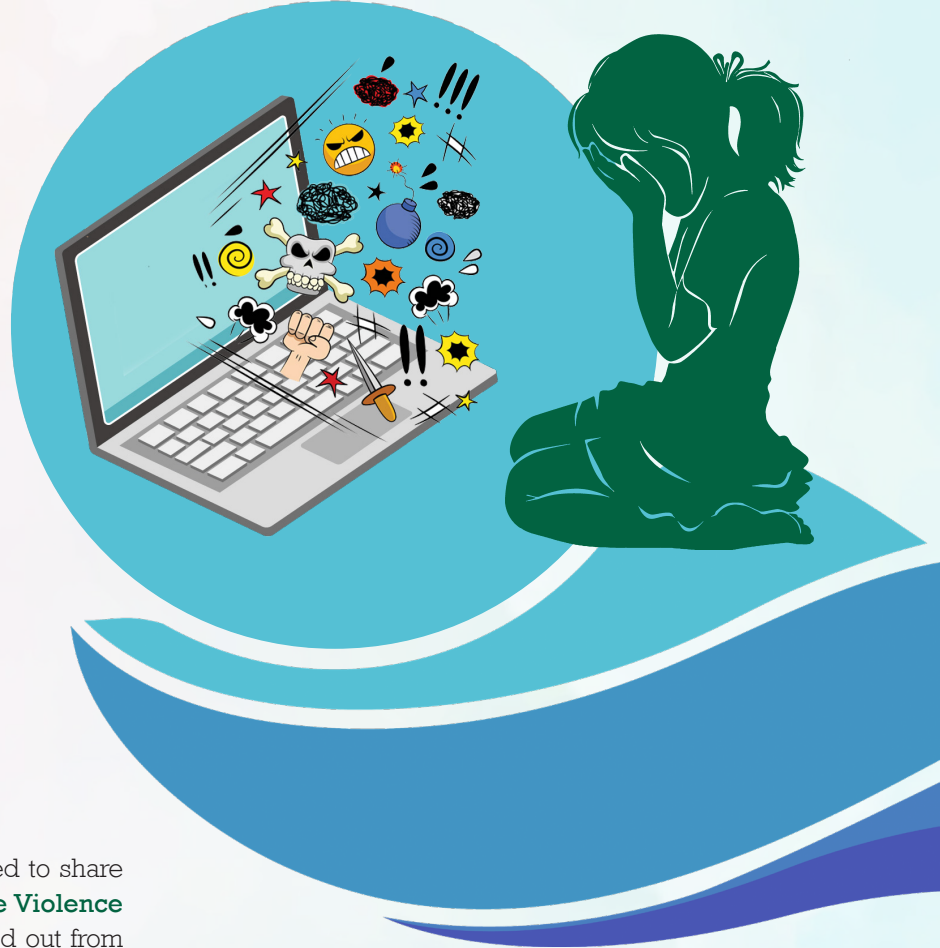
1. INTRODUCTION

The Media Advocacy Group (MAG) is delighted to share the key findings of the study report on “**Online Violence against Women Journalists,**” which was carried out from May 1, 2022 to August 31, 2022. MAG reached out to over 500 women journalists across the country for the purpose of the study, but only 281 responded to survey questions. The respondents worked in various print, broadcast, and online media outlets. MAG organized focused Group Discussions (FGD) and Key Informant Interviews (KII) with people working in the media sector to collect qualitative data during the study process.

Online violence against mostly female journalists has been the subject of several discussions and reports in the media, on social media, and among the journalist community; yet, there is a lack of comprehensive and concrete statistics on the subject. Therefore, the study's objective was to assess the extent of online abuse directed against female journalists and to identify the underlying causes and reasons. Additionally, MAG believes that the study's findings will be useful for the government, parliament, investigation authority, media houses, and journalists themselves to take additional actions to address the problems identified.

MAG would like to extend its sincere gratitude to Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Nepal (FES) for providing the financial support to complete and bring this study with you. In addition, MAG would like to acknowledge the entire study team for their effort and dedication to the timely work.

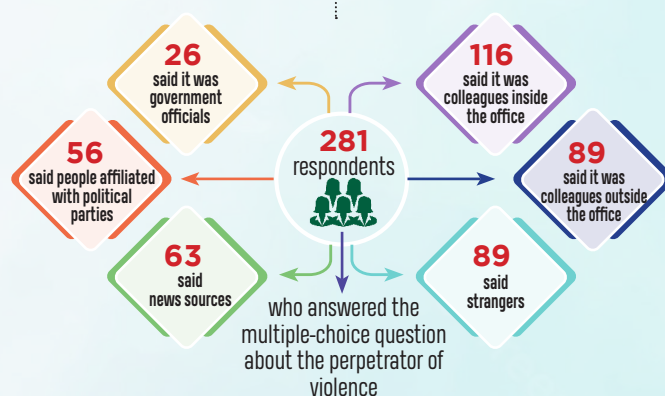
MAG would like to express sincere thanks o Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Nepal (FES) for the financial support to complete this study and bring it with you. Further, MAG would like to acknowledge the contribution and effort of the entire study team for the timely work. A big thanks to all survey respondents, members of the KII and FGD for their time and information, journalists who shared their cases and stories, and all supporters for their assistance in getting this study report published.



2. MAJOR FINDINGS

The research has a number of findings which is alarming to major stakeholders. Because internet penetration in the country has surpassed 90%, internet use has increased across the board. The trend of violence against women professionals has been widely documented on the Internet. Offenders were found to be more at ease with online violence than with in-person violence in many cases.

The followings are the key findings of the study:





The research revealed that Facebook Messenger is the main platform for online violence

62.3%
of respondents answered
Facebook Messenger

12.8%
of respondents answered
WhatsApp

6%
of respondents answered
E-mail

15.3%
of respondents answered
Twitter

11.7%
of respondents answered
Viber

4.6%
of respondents answered
Instagram

40.2%
of female journalists, who
experienced online abuse,
reported that it had a
negative impact on their
career

31%
who experienced online
abuse, claimed it had a
negative impact on their
family life.

62.3%
of those who reported
they had been exposed to
internet violence claimed it
had impacted their mental
health

26.3%
said they had to take
psychosocial counseling
services

the nature of online violence varies, it must be explicitly mentioned in laws and policies to address the complexities of online violence.

- Easy procedural arrangements and practices should be made for reporting of online violence according to prevailing laws. The system/practice that makes it difficult to register complaints should be reformed or revised, and the capacity and sensitivity of police officers and staff who register complaints and carry out their investigations should be improved.
- For the purpose of the inquiry, police complaints against online aggression should be heard quickly in an effective and efficient manner. The atmosphere where the victim feels that justice is delayed or that his or her case or complaint is not heard must be put to an end.
- It appears necessary that every media outlet create and implement a policy on workplace and profession-related online violence. The first level of complaint mechanism should be established, and a focal person for victims of online violence should be appointed in media houses.
- It is critical for media organizations to be prepared for the various forms of online violence that women journalists may face, as well as to provide the necessary mechanisms, arrangements, and support for justice and psychosocial counseling in the event of violence.
- It is necessary to increase women journalists' ability to communicate safely and effectively, for which the Federation of Journalists, government agencies, or media-related organizations should carry out capacity-building programs for women journalists.
- It is necessary for women journalists to increase their capacity and keep information about various forms of online violence and ways to protect themselves from it.

3. MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are the key recommendations based on the finding of the study:

- To deal with increased online violence, policy reform and clear legal arrangements are required. Because

**ABOUT
MAG**

Media Advocacy Group (MAG) is a national-level Non-Governmental Organization working in Nepal since 2008 for the promotion of the Right to Information (RTI), Gender Equality & Women Empowerment, and the Rights of marginalized communities through media advocacy. It has been closely working with and engaging parliamentarians, working journalists, government officials, political leaders, and other professionals in its advocacy efforts and knowledge sharing. Its organizational approach is Right-based Advocacy, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion, Participatory, Transparency, and Accountability, Cultural sensitivity and Strategic partnership.



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