



# TRANSLATING WOMEN'S EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE TO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN THE NEWSROOM

POLICY BRIEF



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# ABOUT NFM

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Naija Feminists Media (NFM) stands out from other media platforms in Nigeria and globally due to its unique focus on the intersection between media and feminist perspectives, advocacy, and intersectional analysis. We publish women-related news, investigative stories, and policies to increase women's visibility in the media and offer perspectives on issues that centre on women.

We compact gender disinformation by monitoring social media platforms and narratives to highlight and correct false and misleading information about women, and it's related women's rights movement.

To this end, we collect gender-related claims, fact-check them using multiple sources, including academic research, journals, and experts, document our findings, and disseminate them on our website and social media platforms.



# INTRODUCTION

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Women consistently excel in academic settings, particularly in mass communication programmes, yet they remain underrepresented in newsroom leadership. Despite dominating the top academic ranks, they face barriers in transitioning to decision-making roles in the media industry. This policy brief highlights key challenges and proposes actionable solutions to bridge this gap.

## KEY ISSUES

**Disparity in Newsroom Leadership:** Women achieve academic excellence in mass communication but are underrepresented as editors and media leaders. For example, at the University of Lagos, all 18 first-class graduates in mass communication were women, yet the leadership in major media houses remains dominated by men.

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Systemic Barriers: Gender biases in hiring and promotions, workplace discrimination, and hostile newsroom environments hinder women's progression to leadership.

Lack of Mentorship and Networks: Women in journalism often lack mentorship and networking opportunities, which are crucial for career advancement.

Workplace Policies and Culture: Media organisations do not provide flexible working conditions or address gender-specific challenges like maternity leave and workplace harassment.

Gaps in Academic Curriculum: Journalism education focuses on technical skills but lacks leadership training, negotiation tactics, and career development strategies.

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# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

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## UNIVERSITIES:

- Revise mass communication curricula to include leadership training, negotiation skills, and career advancement strategies.
- Establish mentorship programmes connecting female students with successful women in media.
- Encourage leadership-focused internships rather than just entry-level writing positions.

## MEDIA ORGANISATIONS:

- Implement transparent and merit-based promotion policies to ensure equal opportunities for women.
  - Provide training on gender bias for newsroom managers.
  - Foster a more inclusive and supportive work environment, including family-friendly policies like flexible work hours and maternity leave.
  - Actively recruit and promote women into editorial and leadership positions.
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## POLICYMAKERS:

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- Advocate for gender-equitable hiring and promotion policies in media organisations.
- Support funding initiatives for women-led media startups.
- Enforce policies against workplace harassment and discrimination.
- Develop regulatory bodies to monitor gender inclusivity in the media sector.

## CALL TO ACTION

- Women in journalism should actively seek mentorship, network within their industry, and advocate for leadership roles.
  - Organisations must take deliberate steps to remove barriers and create an inclusive newsroom culture.
  - Policymakers should ensure that laws and regulations promote gender balance in media leadership.
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# CONCLUSION

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Achieving gender balance in newsroom leadership requires a collective effort from universities, media organisations, policymakers, and individuals. By addressing systemic barriers, fostering mentorship, and implementing inclusive workplace policies, we can ensure that women's educational excellence translates into meaningful leadership roles in journalism.





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DISMANTLING + PATRIARCHY



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