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# **Jos Journal of Media and Communication Studies**

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Jos Journal of Media and Communication Studies (JJMCS) is a peer reviewed journal, published by the Department of Mass Communication, University of Jos, Nigeria to provide a scholarly forum for research reports, theoretical analysis and intellectual dialogue of ideas for mass communication researchers, professionals and practitioners. The scope of this Bi-annual journal is addressed to the international scholarly community and publishes the best of media and communication research and theoretical works in all its diversity from around the world. Jos Journal of Media and Communication Studies (JJMCS) seeks to reflect the great variety of intellectual traditions in the field and to facilitate a dialogue between scholars around the globe. The journal publishes a wide variety of theoretical, philosophical and empirical articles in all areas of mass communication, particularly the Mass Media, New Media, Journalism, Advertising, Public Relations as well as other media and communication related fields and issues.

### Aim and Mission of the Journal

The aim of the journal is to carve a niche for the communication of research findings, discourses of theoretical and philosophical themes in contemporary Mass Communication and to be one of the leading data base for media and communication studies.

### Call for Papers

Jos Journal of Media and Communication Studies is a peer review and refereed journal that is published twice a year (April and September) by the Department of Mass Communication, University of Jos, Nigeria. The aim of the journal is to carve a niche for the communication of research findings, discourses of theoretical and philosophical themes in contemporary Mass Communication.

The journal welcomes theoretical, philosophical and empirical articles in all areas of mass communication, particularly current issues relating to the Mass Media, New Media, Journalism, Advertising, Public Relations and other aspects of communication. Articles discussing broad issues that are anchored on communication or any of its related fields shall also be accepted for publication consideration as well as book reviews.

Each volume of the *Journal of Media Studies* shall have two editions with each edition containing between 15 to 20 articles. Publication of the journal shall be regular and the theme for each edition shall be advertised, if the need arises. The journal at the moment is in hard copy but shall have an online version with time.

### Guidelines for submission of Articles

- Articles must be typeset in A-4 paper, 12 points for the font size, Times New Roman for the font type and 1.5 line spacing. The paper alignment should be "Justified" all through the content.
- Articles should not be longer than 8000 words or 22 pages long - references are included in this estimate. Each article should also have an abstract of not more than 250 words and at least three (3) key words.

- Articles submitted must be original and should not be under consideration in any other journal or publication outlet.
- Every article should have on the first page the following information only:
  - Title of the paper
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  - Please, note that all these information must not appear on any other page in the entire article.
- The second page should contain the title of the article, the abstract and key words before the introduction.
- All articles and reference information must conform to the sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) edition format of the APA style.
- Tables and figures should be inserted in the appropriate places in the body of the article.
- The articles could be written in the American or British English (Spelling). However, consistency should be maintained throughout the paper.
- Authors are responsible for obtaining copyright waivers and permissions as may be needed for republication of any material, text, illustrations etc.

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NOTE: Only papers that conform to this specification shall be accepted and considered for assessment and publication. Papers that do not conform to the specifications shall be out rightly rejected.

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**Evaluation of Gender Disparity in the Nigerian Broadcast  
Media Industry**

By

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**Abstract**

A key feature in the news media is the culture of unequal distribution of roles between male and female journalists. There is seemingly a situation whereby certain roles are more or less exclusive preserve for male journalists. Predicated on this; we conducted a study to ascertain gender distribution of roles and level of discrimination in Nigerian broadcast media. Using the purposive approach, we selected three news media in Lafia, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. These media outfits include PreciousFM, Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) and Nasarawa Broadcasting Service (which houses both radio and television). Data show that while women's position in the news media workforce including reporting roles has changed little (26%), women have not made inroads into key editorial leadership positions. The paper concludes that the relative absence of women in certain roles like management positions and technical activities like camera operators (1%) remain glaring, and point to the masculine hegemony in newsroom culture. The paper recommends among other things gender equality self-regulations of media organizations that may lead to strengthening the position of women by definitive action.

**KEY WORDS:** Broadcast media, gender, journalism, liberal feminism, discrimination

**Introduction**

There seems to be a sustained gender disparity in the various occupations and professions across Nigeria. Often, the disparity between Nigerian men and women tilts to the advantage of men, who systematically keep women away from certain duties or roles. This by implication means women are marginalised in the assignment

of given duties and are deprived of opportunities they have to make their way in the journalism professionals they are given subordinate positions. Reasons for this are tied to cultural beliefs and social construct. This is in spite of the fact that “women constitute about sixty percent of the Nigerian population” (Jacob, Adejumo & David, 2011, p.113). Strikingly, too, is advance in education which has tremendously increased the skill acquisitions that enhance the capabilities and productive efficiencies of both men and women.

It is no longer debatable that with heightened education, women have expanded their roles from procreation and social care-giving within the family to major and significant contributions to development in all fields of human endeavours. In politics, the presence of women in the fourth republic which started on May 29, 1999, is worthy of note. In the National Assembly, there were female Senators who represented their respective Senatorial districts. These included Chief (Mrs) Florence Ita Giwa representing Cross River State South Senatorial District; Mrs. Stella Omu from Delta State and Hajiji Khairat Abdul-Razaq (now Hajiji Gwadabe) representing the Federal Capital Territory. There were also 12 women in the House of Representatives and these included Barrister Iquo Minimah, Mrs. Patience Ogodo, Lola Abiola Edewor, Patricia O. Etteh, Dorcas Odujinrin, J.F. Adeyemi, Binta Garba Koji, Gbemi Saraki, Florence Aya, Linda Ikpeazu, Temi Harrinman and Mercy Almonaisei.

Side-by-side with these is the involvement of women in the executive arm of government where they have impacted in various capacities. At the instance of President Olusegun Obasanjo's administration, several women were appointed into the Federal Executive Council. They were Dr. (Mrs) Kema Chikwe (Minister of Transport), Mrs. Dupe Adelaja (Minister of State, Defence), Dr. (Mrs) Bekky Ketebugwe (Minister of State, Ministry of Solid Minerals), Dr. (Mrs) Amina Ndalo (Minister of State, Federal Ministry of Health), Mrs. Pauline Tallen (Minister of State, Federal Ministry of Science and Technology), and Hajia Aishatu Ismaila (Minister of Women Affairs) (Attio, 2014). Similarly, the Jonathan administration appointed such women as Alison Madueke, Petroleum Minister, Okonjo Iweala, Finance and Coordinating Minister of Economy, and Mobolaji Johnson, Communications Minister just to mention a few.

In journalism, many women have created impact in different capacities. Some have risen to high positions as editors and directors by wading through exerting and challenging assignments which endear the enterprising journalists to their peers and bosses. Emenyonu (1991, p. 81) pointed out that:

Notable Nigerian women journalists like Amma Ogan, Bilkisu Yusuf, Fati Isma Abdu, May Allen Ezekiel as well as their contemporaries in other African countries (Elizabeth Ohene of Ghana and Flavia Ngoma of Cameroon, for example), who have edited quality and prestigious periodicals, must have reached there by showing reportorial prowess and exceptional expertise.

Vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah may be taken as a yardstick to measure the role of women in nation building generally. Giving his message loud

and clear on March 10, 1944, at Aligarh, Quaid cited in Munir, Shehzad and Sahi (2014, p.2) said:

...no nation can made (sic) progress in the true sense unless its women participate in the development and construction work along with men. We are habitual of wrong customs and traditions... There is no reason that women should live in the conditions in which they are being kept.

This underscores the point that social constructs like cultural beliefs, rather than biological and constitutional constraints are perpetually used to place women at a subservient position. In some countries, these problems are often compounded by poorer access to training and education, systemic or hidden discriminatory practices (such as curfews and lack of child care), harassment and overt sexism in hiring practices. Incidentally, this is happening when there is an overwhelming enrolment of female students in Mass Communication with a correspondence rise in female employment. Perhaps, this inclined Borza, Burkevica, Humbert, O'Driscoll, Paats, and Reingarde (2013, p.2), who posited that while women have considerably outnumbered men in university-level and practice-based journalism programmes and that the employment of women in media is increasing, the organisational culture of media remains largely masculine and women are still significantly under-represented at the decision-making level.

While not denying the debilitating effects of sex discrimination in appointments, assignment of roles, promotion and career advancement of women media practitioners, Emenyeonu (1991, p. 80) argued, "the fact remains that no media manager would entrust serious or sacred assignments or positions to any sly and unenterprising staff member, irrespective of sex or other biographic variables". Emenyeonu (1991, p. 80) continued that if anything, those female journalists who play the role of office pets who want to be admired and who want to be excused the difficult beat can only earn the bosses' friendship for as long as they satisfy their sexual advances. Indeed, this is a wake-up call for those aspiring for gender equality particularly women, to rethink their conduct and assert their stand in their places of work.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

By birth, men and female are created as human beings, distinct from other creatures. Therefore, in an ideal setting, the state and its agencies and organs is supposed to guarantee the protection of females and accord them equal right and opportunities with their males counterparts. Such an ideal condition, which rarely exists in human societies, is expected to enable the women-folk play crucial and sustainable role in the societal development through active and direct participation in policy making and strategic plan implementation (Isah, 2005). Nevertheless, inequality has been a dominant feature in gender relations. This is pronounced even in the broadcast media where it appears that the number of women employed in the media sector has indeed increased, yet there is persistent patterns of inequality and hence the quest for equality. In our context, gender equality does not mean women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and

opportunities should not depend on whether they are born male or female. On account of this, the paper seeks to determine the pattern of job distribution inside journalism and the forces that sufficiently promote or inhibit the involvement of women in the business of daily journalism in Nigeria with close reference to broadcast media.

#### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To determine the pattern of gender job distribution across broadcast media organisations in Nigeria.
2. To identify factors that promote or hinder female career prospects.
3. To determine how female media professionals experience their working lives.
4. To explain the extent to which media organisations have developed gender-equality policies.
- 5.

#### **Research Questions**

1. What is the pattern of gender job distribution across broadcast media organisations in Nigeria?
2. What factors promote or hinder female career prospects?
3. How do female media professionals experience their working lives?
4. Do broadcast media organisations develop gender-equality policies?
- 5.

#### **Theoretical Framework**

The study makes use of the liberal feminist theory. Liberal feminist theory has its roots in the writings of Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797), John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), and Harriet Taylor Mill (1807-1858) among others (Sample, 2010).

The basic assumptions of the theory are that gender differences are not based in biology, and therefore, women and men are not all that different -- their common humanity supersedes their procreative differentiation. If women and men are not different, then they should not be treated differently under any considerations including the law. Women should have the same rights as men and the same educational and work opportunities. Therefore, imposing different role expectations on men and women is not only unjust but also counterproductive, tending to create less productive female citizens with "artificial, weak characters". This is why Tong (2009, p.34) averred that "liberal feminists wish to free women from oppressive gender roles—that is, from those roles used as excuses or justifications for giving women a lesser place, or no place at all..." After all, it is patriarchal society that conflates sex and gender, deeming appropriate for women only those jobs associated with the traditional feminine personality.

To the liberal feminist, no body benefits from existing gender inequalities, both men and women are harmed because the potential of females and males alike are suppressed. For example, many women with the potentials to be successful and skilled members of the workforce do not get the opportunity to develop their talents to the full (Haralambos & Holborne, 2008, p. 102).

Much as people particularly women strive for emancipation; the theory suggests that, people should not seek revolutionary changes in society. Rather, they should crave for reforms that take place within existing social structure, through the

democratic system. Viewed this way, Abbot, Wallace and Tyler (2005) opined that liberal feminist theory is modernist in nature because of its emphasis on human progress through rational thought, its belief that just society can be planned and its belief in emancipation. The goal of liberal feminism is to eradicate visible sources of gender discrimination, such as gendered job markets and inequitable wage scales, and with getting women into positions of authority in the professions, government, and cultural institutions.

The appropriateness of liberal feminist theory to this study lies in its ability to show how much modern society discriminates against women and how it can be applied to successfully break down many barriers to women's entry and advancement into male-dominated jobs and professions, help to equalize wage scales among other rights and privileges.

### **Literature Review**

In every country, the constitution is unambiguous on how citizens should be treated irrespective of their status. Section 42 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, for example, states, among other things that:

A citizen of Nigeria of a particular community, ethnic group, place of origin or sex... shall not, by reason only that he is such person (a) be subjected to either expressly or on the practical application of any law in Nigeria or any executive or administrative action of the government to disabilities or restrictions to which citizens of Nigeria or other communities ... sex etc; are not made subject ... or (b) accorded either expressly by or in force in Nigeria or any such executive or administrative action, any privilege or advantage that is not accorded to citizens of Nigeria of other communities... sex, etc.

The underlying principle deducible from the constitutional provisions is that of equality of men and women before the law. This implies equality of reward for work of some kind performed by both men and women alike. Similarly, contained is the right to work without discrimination on the basis of gender (Olojede, 2007). However, practical experience points to the contrary even in the mass media.

Over the years, a considerable body of research has been published on women's occupational positions within media industries. Most of those studies have been undertaken within academia, by women's campaign organisations and NGOs, and sometimes by media organisations themselves. Various reports, which have emerged from the Global Media Monitoring Project programme (1995–2010) and the Global Report on the Status of Women in the News Media (2011), as well as numerous national-level studies, document the continuing gender imbalance in media decision-making and media output (Borza, Burkevica, Humbert, O'Driscoll, Paats, & Reingarde, (2013, p.15). In relation to women's role in the media world, women have progressively outnumbered men in their participation in university-level and practice-based journalism programmes; a trend seen across nations. As a result, researchers have been interested in how women have, or have not, developed their careers within the industry (Delano, 2003; Elmore, 2009).

In many countries women are strongly represented in newsrooms but media are still very male dominated when the top positions are examined. Women are marginalised in the news both in the content of the jobs they do and in the opportunities they have to make their way in the profession. They are even marginalised in the unions that represent them. In one of the first global-level efforts to document and analyse women's occupation of senior posts which covered five countries: Canada, Ecuador, Egypt, India and Nigeria, the results point to a surprising degree of consistency across these countries, showing the extent to which men's attitudes, beliefs and organisational procedures amount to indirect discrimination against women (Borza, Burkevica, Humbert, O'Driscoll, Paats, & Reingarde, (2013, p. 17). Women face serious career development issues in the media industry ranging from sexual harassment and sex-based discrimination, to inflexible employment conditions, unfavourable return-to-work policies, and macho working environments (de Bruin & Ross, 2004; North, 2009).

In a survey, Byerly (2011, p.9) found that:

73% of the top management jobs are occupied by men compared to 27% occupied by women. Among the ranks of reporters, men hold nearly two-thirds of the jobs, compared to 36% held by women. However, among senior professionals, women are nearing parity with 41% of the news gathering, editing and writing jobs.

Unfortunately, this happens in spite of the fact that most countries have enacted one or more laws requiring equal pay and equal treatment of women.

To perfect gender inequality, these countries' media resort to ingrained prejudices which prevent women from advancing into decision-making roles in the media industries. They adopt a tactic known as invisible barriers or glass ceiling, consisting of subtle and also more overt discrimination. However, in terms of remuneration, Byerly (2011, p. 10) found that in Nigeria, women and men journalists are paid equally or, in some cases, women's salaries exceed men's wages.

A general picture of what transpires inside Nigeria broadcast media reveals high discrepancy between male and female as Adeleke (2003) maintained that there is high inequality between men and women thus, creating a wide gap between them both. She is of the opinion that women are not given equal opportunities as their male counterparts especially when it comes to job opportunities. The men feel that they should always be at the top thereby controlling the women and also feel that the women's place is the house where they take care of the children.

One could argue that the treatment meted on female is attributed to the attitude some female journalists form right from training, as they draw the conclusion that journalism is for their male counterpart. In a study by Emenyonu (1991, p. 78) which female respondents were asked to indicate the gender to which journalism was more suitable:

...an overwhelming majority, 116 respondents or 98.3% replied that journalism is a man's career as much it is a woman's. Only two respondents (1.6%) said that journalism was exclusively a man's career. Asked what they would do if their career began to jeopardise their family life, more than half the sample — 83 respondents (69.1

%) — said they would not be bothered. All in this category were single. Thirty-three respondents, including all five married women in the sample, indicated that they would transfer to less demanding jobs. Four respondents said they would quit the career.

Other findings by Emenyeonu (1991, p. 79) regarding perception of the performance of Nigerian female journalists, show that “66 respondents (55%) strongly agreed that Nigerian women in journalism were as good and as productive as their male colleagues, 36 (30%) agreed to this assertion, eight were neutral, while those who strongly disagreed or merely disagreed were five in each case.” This affirms the need for gender equality in the broadcast media. Therefore, the criteria for appointment and distribution of roles should not base on one’s sex but on merit. Buoyed by this fact Jacob, Adejuwon and David (2011, p.114) concluded with a convincing argument that:

An increasing number of bright and able people must become involved... Ours is a difficult and exhilarating form...not for the faint of heart, not for the tidy-minded, and in these days of complexity not for the stupid. We need men and women who can bring...the highest order of intellect, social motivations sturdy enough to pursue good purposes despite setbacks, and a resilience of spirit equal to the frustrations of public life.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted quantitative and qualitative research methods. The survey study included three broadcast news media in Lafia, capital city of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. These news media outfits include Precious FM, Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) and Nasarawa Broadcasting Service which were purposively selected. Data were collected using a questionnaire that requested a breakdown of employees by place of work, gender and role performed. Additional questions sought information about promotional practices, gender-related policies, and other routines affecting news production. The questionnaires were administered on 140 respondents. Together, 15 respondents, five each from the three media outfits were interviewed for the study. Data from questionnaire were analysed by the authors using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and presented in charts while interview was descriptively analysed.

### **Data Analysis and Presentation**

Out of the 140 questionnaires distributed, only 127 (91%) were retrieved and analysed as presented below. This was complemented with responses from selected in-depth interviews conducted with 15 interviewees and were descriptively presented. The two demographic variables considered were sex and marital status. Based on data 93(73%) respondents were male while 34(27%) were female. In the case of their marital status, 106(83%) were married as against the remaining 21(17%) who were single. This is presented on Table 1 below.

Table 1: Demographic Variables

| Sex                   | Frequency  | Percentage  |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------|
| Male                  | 93         | 73%         |
| Female                | 34         | 27%         |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>127</b> | <b>100</b>  |
| <b>Marital Status</b> |            |             |
| Married               | 106        | 83%         |
| Single                | 21         | 17%         |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>127</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**RQ1.** What is the pattern of job distribution across broadcast media organisations in Nigeria?

In order to answer research question one, the researchers relied on data provided by the three broadcast media houses as shown on Table 2 below. Accordingly, management staff and editors of NTA Lafia were 5(8%) and 3(6%) respectively all of whom were male. The work distribution also shows that there were 18(34%) male reporters as against their 11(21%) female counterparts. The media also had 9(17%) male camera operators as well as 4(6%) and 3(5%) male and female Technical/other staff respectively. In the same vein, NBS had 5(8%) management staff who were all male; 4(6.4%) editors all male; 8(13%) male camera operators and 1(2%) female camera operator. Also, the station had 4(6%) and 3(5%) male and female members of staff respectively in the capacity of Technicians/others. In the case of Precious FM, management staff and editors were 4(14%) and 3(10.3%) respectively all male. While there were 11(38%) male reporters and 7(24%) female reporters, there were also 3(10%) male and 1(3%) female who were Technicians/other staff.

Table 2: Staff job description of the three broadcast stations.

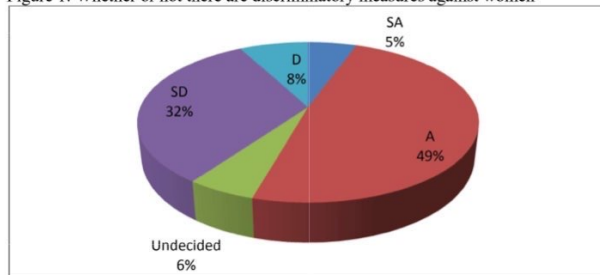
| Station          | Work Status       | No. of Males   | No. of Females   | Total           |
|------------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| NTA Lafia        | Management        | 5(8%)          | -                | 5(8%)           |
|                  | Editor            | 3(6%)          | -                | 3(6%)           |
|                  | Reporter          | 18(34%)        | 11(21%)          | 29(55%)         |
|                  | Camera Operator   | 9(17%)         | -                | 9(17%)          |
|                  | Technician/others | 4(8%)          | 3(6%)            | 7(11.1%)        |
| <b>Sub-Total</b> |                   | <b>39(74%)</b> | <b>14(26.4%)</b> | <b>53(100%)</b> |

|                    |                   |                 |                |                  |
|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
| NBS                | Management        | 5(8%)           | -              | 5(8%)            |
|                    | Editor            | 4(6.4%)         | -              | 4(6.4%)          |
|                    | Reporter          | 24(38%)         | 14(22%)        | 38(60.3%)        |
|                    | Camera Operator   | 8(12.6%)        | 1(1.5%)        | 9(14.2%)         |
|                    | Technician/others | 4(6.4%)         | 3(5%)          | 3(11%)           |
| <b>Sub-Total</b>   |                   | <b>45(71%)</b>  | <b>18(29%)</b> | <b>63(100%)</b>  |
| Precious FM        | Management        | 4(14%)          | -              | 4(14%)           |
|                    | Editor            | 3(10.3%)        | -              | 3(10.3%)         |
|                    | Reporter          | 11(38%)         | 7(24%)         | 18(62%)          |
|                    | Camera Operator   | -               | -              | -                |
|                    | Technician/others | 3(10%)          | 1(3%)          | 4(14%)           |
| <b>Sub-Total</b>   |                   | <b>21(72%)</b>  | <b>8(28%)</b>  | <b>29(100%)</b>  |
| <b>Grand Total</b> |                   | <b>105(72%)</b> | <b>40(28%)</b> | <b>145(100%)</b> |

**RQ2. What factors promote or hinder female career prospects?**

In order to proffer solution to this research question, the researchers sought to know if there exist discriminatory measures against women. Almost half respondents 62(49%) answered in the affirmative while 7(5%) strongly agree that there are certain measures that place men at advantage. While 7(6%) of the respondents were neutral, 41(32%) and 10(8%) strongly disagree and disagree respectively that there are no discriminatory measures against women.

Figure 1: Whether or not there are discriminatory measures against women



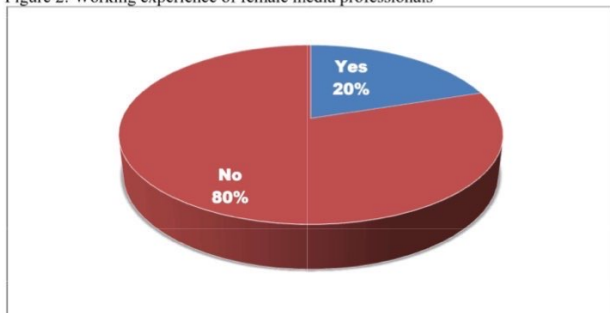
To further probe into the nature of the discriminatory measures, most of the interviews who answered in the affirmative of the existence of such measures, however, conceded that, the measures in question are unwritten rules that restrict women in some cases. According to Khadijat:

Much as one may be tempted to conclude that gender equality seems to be one of the policy thrusts of media industry, there are some unwritten rules that prohibit female journalists from performing certain tasks at given situations. For instance, if one is fortunately or unfortunately pregnant, there is slim possibility of her being assigned to certain beats.

**RQ3.**How do female media professionals experience their working lives?

Several items in the questionnaire proved useful. The first is to know if female media staff are harassed while discharging their duties. As shown on Figure 2 below, as many as 101(80%) respondents disagree that they are harassed in the course of carrying out their duties as against the 26(20%) respondents who agree that they are harassed.

Figure 2: Working experience of female media professionals

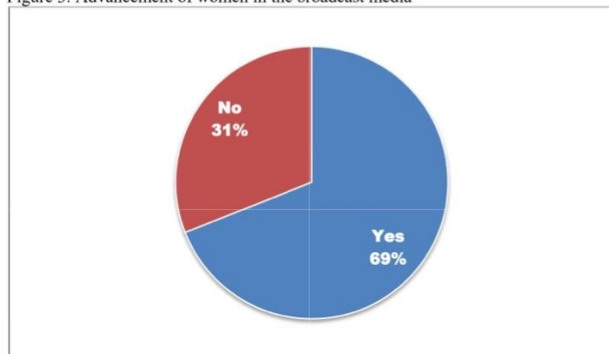


Among the interviewees whose opinion was sought to establish the veracity of the issue of harassment of female journalists, most of those who disagree that female journalists are harassed shared similar opinion that, it is rare and such extreme cases are sometimes prompted by the affected journalist as one of the interviewees, Jamila said:

Harassment is a product of certain factors including mode of dressing and one's body language. It is rather unfortunate that despite sustained appeal by management for staff to dress modestly, few female journalists disregard such appeals. The permissiveness of such erring staff is, however, common not within the vicinity of the office but when they are assigned to beats one would regard exclusive. And their guests, who could not resist such indirect advance, do not hesitate to appropriate it.

On whether or not advancement of women in the broadcast media is based on merit, 88(69%) of the respondents agree to that while 39(31%) disagree that female advancement in the broadcast media is based on merit.

Figure 3: Advancement of women in the broadcast media



In an attempt to seek deeper insights into determinants of female advancement in the broadcast media, those interviewed generally attribute it to individual productivity. In the words of one of the interviewees, Hadiza:

It sounds awkward that advancement in career of women in journalism is induced by extraneous factors rather than one's proficiency, commitment and dedication to work. Despite the fact that I am still at a relatively lower rung of the ladder, I did not attain my status as an Assistant Senior reporter with strings attached and I firmly believe that is the case with many others out there.

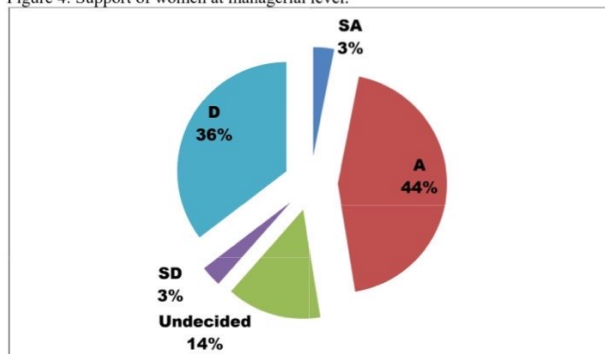
Nevertheless, there are others who believe that for female journalists to steadily advance in their professional calling, they must have godfathers of some sort or have unholy relationship with the powers that be. One of the female journalists, who prefers being anonymous lamented during an interview thus:

One would be living in the world of fantasy that everything takes its normal and natural course. The general level of corruption in different endeavours in the country does not exempt the broadcast industry. By this I mean cronyism and nepotism which is noticeable right from recruitment stage... No matter how much one strives, one is still at the whim and caprice of one's superiors most of whom are not objective in their assessment. The most agonizing of it all is when he or she seems not to be appreciative of whatever one does but

surprisingly praises others whose reports obviously do not measure up to standard.

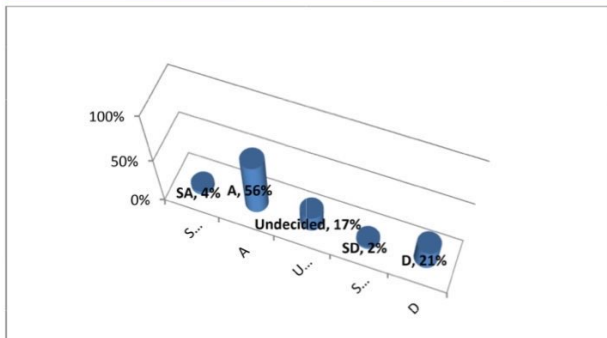
In an attempt to find out if women journalists who have climbed to the top support and encourage other women still on their way to the top, 4(3%) and 56(44%) respondents strongly agree and agree respectively that those at the top are supportive. While 18(14%) respondents were neutral, 4(3%) and 45(36%) respondents strongly disagree and disagree respectively that women journalists who are accomplished neither support nor encourage women journalists aspiring to get to the top as presented on Figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Support of women at managerial level.



When respondents were required to indicate if change might impact on the media industry if women were proactive and move to the management position in the broadcast media, 5(4%) and 71(56%) strongly agree and agree respectively while 21(17%) respondents were neutral. On the contrary, 3(2%) and 27(21%) respondents strongly disagree and disagree that if women were proactive and move to the management position in the broadcast media, their elevation might impact on the media industry as Figure 5 below shows.

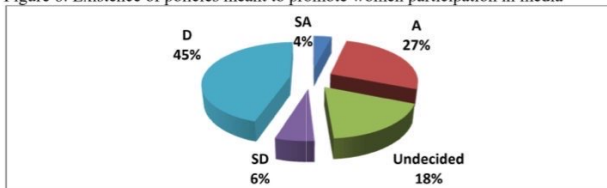
Figure 5: Whether or not change might impact on the media industry if women were proactive



**RQ4. Do broadcast media organisations develop gender-equality policies?**

As shown on Figure 6 below, 5(4%) respondents strongly agree that there are policies aimed at promoting women participation just as 34(27%) also agree. While 23(18%) respondents were neutral, 8(6%) and 57(45%) respondents strongly disagree and disagree respectively that there are policies aimed at promoting women participation in the broadcast media.

Figure 6: Existence of policies meant to promote women participation in media



While probing to deeply know about the existence of gender-equality policies to bridge the gap between male and female journalists in terms of job distribution, most of the interviewees were of the opinion that, broadcast media houses in Nigeria lack such policies. According to one of them:

Even if they have, such policies are not expressly communicated to staff talk less of their implementation.

The interviewees created the general impression as posited by one of them in the person of Jessica thus:

Some of us are unaware of the existence of such policies. But if they exist, it could be in principle. Otherwise why are media houses

generally dominated by men? Are we saying they are better educated and serve longer in the media organization to warrant them attain the status they attain? Take a look at what is obtainable across media houses in Nigeria; you will better appreciate what I am talking about. Apart from very few cases where women are at managerial positions or as editors among others, most of these positions are occupied by men. One is however, mindful of the fact that female journalists are averse to certain duties like camera operators as they are naturally inclined to work as presenters and announcers. But that is not an excuse to systematically scheme out daring female journalists.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The need to validate or prove otherwise the general disproportionate role distribution of gender in the broadcast media in favour of men informs this study and findings are illuminating. Based on data on Table 2, out of the 145 staff of the three media houses, 105(72%) are male while 40(28%) are female meaning there are more male journalists than female. A cursory look at the table further reveals that none of the media houses has any female at the management position neither do they have in the capacity of editors. Similarly, apart from NBS which has one camera operator as against the 8 male camera operators, the entire 9 camera operators of NTA are all male. Even reporters which one would expect a near proportionate representation, NTA has 18 male as against eleven female reporters, NBS has 24 male reporters as against their 14 female counterpart while Precious FM has eleven male reporters as against 7 female reporters. With this, one does not require rocket science to determine that the role distribution is male-dominated. This is consistent with findings by Seethaler and Oggolder (2011, p.81) that:

The majority of the journalism workforce across regions was found in the two occupational levels most closely associated with routine news gathering, writing and editing. The junior professional level was found to be male-dominated, with nearly two-thirds (63.9%) of the positions held by men, compared to women (36.1%). Junior professionals include writer, producer, sub-editor, correspondent and production assistant.

Apart from the obvious imbalance in the workforce, more than half of the respondents (54%) admit the presence of discriminatory measures against female journalists as Figure 2 shows. This is complemented with submission by one of the interviewees who said that “there are some unwritten rules that prohibit female journalists from performing certain tasks at given situation”. By implication, masculine hegemony could be responsible for the sustained bias that disadvantages female journalists.

It is worthy of note that the study explores how the female media professionals experience their working lives. Issues that come to focus are harassment, mode of advancement and encouragement from other women that have got to the top. Of the total respondents, 80% of them deny being harassed in the course of discharging their duties. This position is reinforced by submission of one of

the interviewees, who makes it pellucid that, "Harassment is a product of certain factors including mode of dressing and one's body language. It is rather unfortunate that despite sustained appeal by management for staff to dress modestly, few female journalists disregard such appeals" and therefore, fall prey to immoral minds. In the case of female promotion to top positions, most (69%) of the respondents answer in affirmative that promotion is based on merit irrespective of sex. One of the interviewees corroborates this when she says, "It sounds awkward that advancement in career of women in journalism is induced by extraneous factors rather than one's proficiency, commitment and dedication to work..." This presupposes that under any considerations, there is appropriate reward for hard work and excellent performance. Similarly, 46% of the respondents strongly agree that accomplished female journalists assist and encourage other female journalists aspiring to get to the top. Nevertheless, one of the interviewees has a contrary opinion that, "One would be living in the world of fantasy that everything takes its normal and natural course. The general level of corruption in different endeavours in the country does not exempt the broadcast industry".

A distinction could also be made of respondents who know whether policies are in place to narrow the gap between male and female journalists. Data show that insignificant 4% respondents strongly agree that there are policies aimed at promoting women participation just as 27% also agree. While 18% respondents were neutral, 6% and 45% respondents strongly disagree and disagree respectively that there are policies aimed at promoting women participation in the broadcast media. Accordingly, one of the interviewees, who speaks the mind of others says, "Some of us are unaware of the existence of such policies. But if they exist, it could be in principle. Otherwise why are media houses generally dominated by men?" Perhaps, this inclined European Commission (2010, pp. 9–10) to conclude that:

In relation to all forms of inequality and sex-based discrimination in employment in the media sector, media enterprises should, as any other employer, participate actively in positive action programmes on gender equality at work, as well as adopt various strategies and implement best practice ... within the scope of such a positive action plan, women should be actively promoted into senior positions in media companies ...'

This is admission of the fact that female journalists in the broadcast media have continued to take subordinate position and hence, the need to correct the imbalance by deploying all possible measures.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

The purpose of this study is to determine the role distribution of male and female workforce in the Nigerian broadcast media. In the main part of the study, concepts from liberal feminist theory were used, in relation both to management positions and general working experience with a view to reversing the status quo in the distribution of journalistic power in favour of increased access to the profession by women. This is in spite of the fact that literature demonstrates that, while women may considerably outnumber men in university level and practice-based journalism

programmes and women are employed in media professions in ever-increasing numbers, the organisational culture of media organisations remains largely masculine, and women are still significantly under-represented in the decision-making structures of media organisations. The persistent inequalities in the form of under-representation, glass-ceiling barriers to advancement remain firmly embedded within the broadcast media. To avoid the discrepancy requires female journalists to be more aggressive in proving their worth for recognition.

### **Recommendations**

Broadcast media organisations should develop strategies specifically addressing the under-representation of women in decision-making and the barriers that women face in their professional advancement. Such strategies can ensure the critical mass of women employed in the media sector to reach prominent and influential decision-making posts.

Against the backdrop that promotion is based on merit, it is expedient that female journalists should take hard work and efficiency as their watch words. Equipped with these attributes, they will carve a niche in their professional calling.

Female journalist should dress modestly at all times. This is premised on the standpoint that some modes of dressings are invitation to undue harassment which some journalists experience.

It is also recommended that women are involved in the design and implementation of effective and efficient gender-sensitive policies and programmes like quota system, within media organisations, at all levels. Also, it is recommended that regular monitoring of implementation is carried out to foster equality between women and men.

Efforts to increase the representation of women in decision-making positions in media organisations should be constant and more efficient at national policy level. Policies should ensure that media organisations, like all organisations, strive to design and implement comprehensive strategies and, inter alia, make selection, recruitment and promotion processes transparent and based on merit and competence.

Professional media associations like NUJ and NAWOJ should play an active role in developing practical strategies of gender equality and providing tools for the empowerment of under-represented groups in decision-making in the media industry.

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