

Glass Ceilings in the Newsroom: The Underrepresentation of Women in Indian Media Leadership

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Abstract

The media industry serves as a powerful societal pillar, shaping narratives and influencing public opinion. However, the sector has long been criticized for gender imbalances in its leadership roles. Despite strides in various sectors, the representation of women in decision-making positions within Indian news media remains insufficient. This underrepresentation of women in leadership roles within the news media industry remains a pressing concern, particularly in India. This paper explores the leadership and managerial roles of women in Indian news media. Drawing on quantitative research, qualitative interviews, and secondary data analysis, this study examines the current scenario, identifies challenges, and evaluates opportunities for women leaders in news media. Recommendations for promoting gender equity in Indian newsrooms are also proposed.

Keywords: *Female leaders, women editors, Indian News Media, leadership, female managers, women representations, media industry*

Introduction

In varied leadership roles in the arenas of politics, education, sports, social services, healthcare, hospitality, and business, women have proved their competence. Over the last two decades, the number of women leaders in these fields has shown an upward trend. However, the scenario of women leaders in the media industry is not that encouraging. A study of 200 major online and offline news outlets in four continents of the world revealed that less than one-fourth of the top news editors are females. As per a UNESCO report, 'on the global scale, women make up only 24 % of the people heard, read about or seen in the news and only a few manage to reach decision-making positions within media organizations (UNESCO, 2017). However, it is also true that the participation of women in media varies from nation to nation. A study conducted by Reuters Institute revealed that in Japan, none of the major news outlets studied have women as their top editors whereas 47 % of the top editors in South Africa are women (Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, 2020). Women represent only a third (33.3 percent) of the full-time journalism workforce in 522

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