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Women making headlines: influences of women editors on newsroom socialisation and the news agenda

Luimes-Sindane, Wilhelmina Henrietta

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Abstract

This study takes a qualitative look at the interplay between women's leadership and newsroom socialisation and the news agenda as experienced and understood by women editors at the *Mail & Guardian,* through a process of interviews with women editors, supplemented by a brief look at the publication when referenced during the course of the interviews.

This study confirms previous research that suggests that an increase of women in the newsroom is not enough to address issues of gender representation in newsrooms and news representation. Although at the *Mail & Guardian*, this study indicates that the appointment of a woman editor impacted the newsroom positively on gender awareness issues and the publication itself in its gender representation, there are indications that this is a result of a number of factors and not gender alone.

In summary, this research found that it is the combination of positioning, power and influence, with a gender agenda, intention and purpose, in an environment that is receptive to change, that will significantly contribute to changes both within the socialisation of the newsroom and translate into a higher level of gender awareness and sensitivity in newspaper's gender representation.