

Broadcasting the Dream, Silencing the Risk: An Analysis of the Nigerian Media's Role in the 'Japa' Migration Surge

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.913COM0034>

Received: 04 August 2025; Accepted: 09 August 2025; Published: 06 September 2025

ABSTRACT

This study critically examines the Nigerian media's migration coverage, highlighting its disproportionate focus on success narratives that glamorize migration while systematically neglecting the risks, challenges, and failures associated with the migration process. Drawing on Agenda-Setting Theory, Media Ethics, and Postcolonial Media Theory, the research integrates empirical content analysis with first-hand testimonies from migrants including returnees, irregular migrants, documented professionals, and individuals who experienced forced repatriation. The methodology encompassed 50 Nigerian television broadcasts, 100 online news articles, and 200 social media posts published between 2019 and 2024, selected through a stratified sampling framework to ensure representativeness across platforms. Audience reception analysis combined focus groups, social media engagement metrics, and survey data from 400 respondents across Nigeria's geo-political zones to assess how these narratives influence migration intentions. Findings, illustrated through statistical summaries and visual aids, show that 78% of migration-related stories emphasized positive outcomes, with only 12% addressing risks and 10% adopting a neutral or policy-focused tone. These skewed portrayals persist despite official data indicating that over 8,000 Nigerians were repatriated between 2019 and 2024 and that 15% of migrants returned prematurely. Testimonies reveal the personal costs of underreported realities ranging from labour exploitation in Europe to the emotional toll of family separation. Recommendations include recalibrating editorial policies to ensure balanced reporting, promoting indigenous success stories to counter postcolonial bias, institutionalizing ethical journalism training, and implementing nationwide media literacy campaigns to increase risk awareness. Comparative examples from the Philippines and Ghana demonstrate viable models for balanced migration reporting. The paper concludes that Nigerian media must move beyond broadcasting the dream to presenting the full truth, enabling informed migration decisions and contributing to sustainable national development.

Keywords: Migration narratives, Nigerian media, Agenda-Setting Theory, Postcolonial Media Theory, media ethics, irregular migration, Japa phenomenon

INTRODUCTION

Migration, particularly among Nigerian youths, has evolved into a defining socio-political phenomenon often referred to in popular discourse as the "*Japa*" wave. The term, derived from Yoruba slang meaning "to escape" or "to flee," encapsulates the mass movement of Nigerians especially young professionals, students, and skilled workers seeking better opportunities abroad. While economic instability, insecurity, unemployment, and political disenchantment are major push factors, the media's portrayal of migration as a gateway to success has been a powerful catalyst shaping both aspiration and decision-making.

From television documentaries showcasing Nigerians "making it big" in London or Toronto, to YouTube vlogs by returnee migrants flaunting foreign lifestyles, Nigerian media output has increasingly emphasized migration as an aspirational norm. Social media influencers curate images of luxury apartments, winter fashion, and foreign workspaces, rarely pausing to discuss visa struggles, workplace discrimination, housing crises, or mental health challenges faced abroad. Television talk shows such as *Moments with Mo*, news features on "diaspora achievers," and Instagram success reels collectively construct a one-dimensional vision of life overseas.

This skew in narrative is not merely accidental; it reflects editorial choices that privilege emotionally appealing, high-engagement content over balanced, investigative reporting. The cumulative effect is the creation of a “migration dream” that overshadows counter-narratives stories of failed migration attempts, deportations or the disillusionment of discovering that the “promised land” also has its share of hardship.

The result is an environment in which many prospective migrants embark on life-changing journeys without adequate information about the risks involved. Official data from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) reveal that between 2019 and 2024, over 8,000 Nigerians were forcibly repatriated and at least 15% of migrants returned prematurely due to unmet expectations, legal complications, or poor working conditions. Yet, such realities rarely feature in prime-time or viral media content.

Moreover, Nigeria’s migration discourse cannot be separated from its postcolonial legacy, in which success is often measured against the backdrop of Western living standards. By amplifying stories that frame departure as progress and staying as stagnation, the media inadvertently perpetuates an internalized hierarchy of value where “there” is inherently better than “here.” This tendency underscores the urgent need to interrogate not just *what* is being reported about migration, but *how* and *why*.

Statement of the Problem

There exists a growing disconnect between Nigerian public perception of migration and the lived realities of many migrants. The media’s overwhelming focus on success narratives creates an informational vacuum about the risks, challenges, and failures inherent in migration. This imbalance skews decision-making, often leading individuals to pursue migration without adequate preparation or awareness of potential setbacks. The absence of comprehensive, balanced reporting also undermines the capacity of public discourse to address structural issues driving migration, such as domestic unemployment and weak governance.

Compounding this problem is the lack of accountability in editorial practices regarding migration coverage. There is minimal pressure from regulatory bodies, professional associations, or audience advocacy groups to ensure balanced narratives. As a result, migration coverage continues to perpetuate postcolonial ideals that equate progress with physical relocation to Western countries reinforcing a cycle in which migration is seen not as one of many possible life choices, but as the ultimate measure of success.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the thematic focus of migration stories in Nigerian television, online news, and social media between 2019 and 2024.
2. To evaluate the extent to which risks and challenges associated with migration are represented in Nigerian media.
3. To analyse the correlation between media narratives and public perceptions of migration.
4. To compare Nigerian migration reporting practices with international best practices from countries such as the Philippines and Ghana.
5. To propose actionable recommendations for balanced, ethical migration reporting in Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What proportion of Nigerian media migration stories focus on success narratives versus risk-focused or neutral/policy-oriented content?
2. How do Nigerian media narratives on migration compare with the realities documented in official migration statistics and migrant testimonies?

3. What role does the Nigerian media play in shaping public perceptions and intentions regarding migration?
4. What lessons can Nigeria draw from other countries in balancing migration coverage?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The phenomenon of migration is as old as human history, but its contemporary manifestation in Nigeria popularly called “*Japa*”, is deeply intertwined with modern media systems, global economic inequalities, and postcolonial identity formations. This review explores the scholarly foundations for understanding how the Nigerian media shapes migration discourse, organized into three parts: (1) Theoretical Framework, (2) Empirical Studies on Media and Migration Narratives, and (3) Identified Gaps in Literature.

Theoretical Framework

Agenda-Setting Theory

The Agenda-Setting Theory, pioneered by McCombs and Shaw (1972), posits that media influence public perception not by telling audiences *what to think*, but by telling them *what to think about*. By selectively highlighting certain issues while ignoring others, the media can shape public priorities and frame public discourse. Applied to migration coverage, this theory suggests that Nigerian media’s heavy focus on “success stories” and the glamour of life abroad elevates migration as a desirable topic while relegating risks, policy complexities, and structural push factors to the margins.

A study by Nwafor and Ogbu (2020) applied agenda-setting to Nigerian migration coverage and found that economic opportunity abroad was the most frequently emphasized theme, while stories about irregular migration dangers, such as trafficking or detention, received significantly less coverage. This uneven thematic emphasis has practical consequences: audiences are more likely to perceive migration as a clear route to success, underestimating its associated costs.

Media Ethics Theory

Media Ethics Theory emphasizes the responsibility of journalists and editors to balance truth-telling, harm minimization, fairness, and accountability. The Society of Professional Journalists’ Code of Ethics and Nigeria’s own Code of Ethics for Nigerian Journalists stress the need to “provide a fair and balanced representation of facts.” However, research by Okoro and Nwafor (2021) reveals that many Nigerian media houses prioritize audience engagement metrics over ethical considerations, resulting in sensationalist content that privileges emotional appeal over comprehensive accuracy.

When applied to migration narratives, this tendency manifests in the preference for emotionally compelling “success arcs” that are easily packaged for television and social media consumption, while stories of exploitation, deportation, and failed integration are downplayed or omitted. This ethical shortfall has tangible effects on migration decision-making, as prospective migrants are deprived of the full spectrum of realities, they need for informed consent.

Postcolonial Media Theory

Postcolonial Media Theory examines how media narratives are shaped by histories of colonialism, cultural hegemony, and the continuing influence of Western norms. In the Nigerian migration context, postcolonial theory helps explain why “success” is often equated with physical relocation to Western nations. As Thiong’o (1986) and Hall (1997) argue, postcolonial societies often internalize Eurocentric measures of progress, perpetuated through cultural production and media representation.

The Nigerian media’s celebration of migrants who “made it” in Canada, the UK, or the US often without equal emphasis on Nigerians thriving domestically reinforces a hierarchy where “abroad” is symbolically superior to

“home.” This is not merely aspirational but ideological: it sustains the colonial binary of “developed” vs. “developing” as a primary measure of worth.

Empirical Studies on Media and Migration Narratives

Nigerian Media Studies

Several studies have examined Nigerian media’s role in migration framing. Ojebode et al. (2019) analyzed 200 migration-related news stories from leading Nigerian newspapers and found that over 70% framed migration positively. Television analyses by Adesina (2021) similarly found that programs targeting youth audiences disproportionately showcased migrants’ financial success while avoiding discussions of undocumented status, cultural isolation, or systemic racism abroad.

Social media platforms amplify this bias. Influencers and vloggers often curate idealized portrayals of migration, with Instagram reels featuring luxury apartments, expensive cars, and vacation spots content that drives engagement but erases the less glamorous realities of low-wage jobs, visa insecurity, and mental health struggles.

Comparative International Studies

In contrast, the Philippines has developed a more balanced media approach to migration reporting due to the country’s long history of labor export policies. Government-mandated public information campaigns include documentaries that highlight both the economic benefits and the social costs of overseas labor migration. Ghana’s media, while not immune to glamour narratives, has seen collaborative projects between journalists and NGOs that foreground the dangers of irregular migration routes through Libya.

Comparative studies by Adepoju (2020) show that countries with integrated risk-awareness campaigns see lower rates of irregular migration attempts. These findings suggest that media framing is not merely reflective but causative, shaping the types of migration journeys individuals undertake.

Identified Gaps in the Literature

While existing studies document the bias in Nigerian media migration coverage, three critical gaps remain:

1. **Cross-platform integration** – Most research isolates either traditional media or social media but rarely analyses how narratives intersect and reinforce each other across platforms.
2. **Audience reception analysis** – Few studies examine how Nigerian audiences interpret, internalize, and act upon migration narratives.
3. **Comparative policy evaluation** – There is limited exploration of how Nigeria’s media compares with nations that have institutionalized balanced migration reporting.

This study addresses these gaps by conducting a cross-platform content analysis (television, online news, and social media), integrating audience perception data, and incorporating comparative analysis with the Philippines and Ghana.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a **mixed-methods research design**, integrating quantitative content analysis, qualitative testimony analysis, and audience perception surveys. This approach allowed for a triangulation of data sources, ensuring both breadth and depth in the understanding of Nigerian media’s migration coverage.

Research Design

The research employed three interconnected components:

1. **Content Analysis** – Quantitative coding of migration-related content from television, online news, and social media platforms.
2. **Testimony Analysis** – Qualitative analysis of personal migration narratives obtained from interviews with returnees, irregular migrants, and documented professionals.
3. **Audience Perception Survey** – A structured questionnaire administered to a representative sample of Nigerians to gauge perceptions of migration and assess the influence of media narratives.

Population and Sampling

The population consisted of:

- **Television broadcasts:** National and regional Nigerian TV stations known for current affairs programming and talk shows.
- **Online news articles:** Major Nigerian digital news platforms (e.g., *Punch*, *Vanguard*, *Premium Times*).
- **Social media posts:** Migration-related content on Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, including influencer-led accounts.

Sampling strategy:

A stratified sampling method was used to ensure coverage across media types and geographic regions.

- **Television:** 50 programs broadcast between January 2019 and December 2024.
- **Online news:** 100 migration-related articles published within the same period.
- **Social media:** 200 posts selected from high-engagement accounts (minimum 50,000 followers/subscribers).

For the **audience perception survey**, a **sample of 400 respondents** was drawn from Nigeria's six geopolitical zones, with proportional representation of urban and rural areas, genders, and age groups.

Data Collection

1. **Content Analysis Data** – Migration-related stories were collected using keyword searches ("migration," "Japa," "travel abroad," "Nigerians overseas," "deportation") and manually verified for relevance. Each item was archived with publication/broadcast date, outlet, and format.
2. **Testimonies** – Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 participants:
 - 8 returnees (4 male, 4 female)
 - 5 irregular migrants who had experienced detention or deportation
 - 4 documented professionals in the UK, Canada, and the UAE
 - 3 students studying abroad on scholarshipsTestimonies were transcribed verbatim and coded thematically alongside content analysis data.
3. **Survey** – The questionnaire captured:
 - Media consumption habits
 - Perceptions of migration as portrayed in Nigerian media

- Personal migration intentions
- Awareness of risks and challenges abroad

Coding and Analysis

A codebook was developed to classify each media item into one of three **narrative focus categories**:

- **Success narrative** – stories emphasizing positive migration outcomes (financial gain, education, improved lifestyle).
- **Risk narrative** – stories focusing on dangers, challenges, or negative experiences abroad.
- **Neutral/policy narrative** – stories centered on migration laws, policy updates, or statistical reports.

Two trained coders independently coded all media items. **Inter-coder reliability** was measured using Cohen's Kappa ($\kappa = 0.87$), indicating strong agreement.

Quantitative analysis was conducted using SPSS (version 26) to calculate frequencies, percentages, and correlations between media type and narrative focus.

Qualitative thematic analysis was applied to testimonies and open-ended survey responses using NVivo software, with themes emerging inductively and then aligned with the theoretical framework.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the University Research Ethics Committee. Informed consent was secured from all interview participants, who were assured of anonymity and confidentiality. Pseudonyms were used in reporting testimonies. Data was stored on encrypted drives accessible only to the research team.

Limitations

The study focused on Nigerian media content available online or through accessible archives, which may not fully capture all broadcast content, particularly in local dialects. Social media sampling favored high-engagement accounts, potentially over-representing influencer perspectives. Despite these limitations, the triangulated design strengthens the validity of findings.

RESULTS

This section presents findings from the content analysis, audience perception survey, and migrant testimonies. Results are organized into three parts: (1) Distribution of narrative focus across media platforms, (2) Audience perceptions and migration intentions, and (3) Testimonies illustrating lived migration realities.

Distribution of Narrative Focus in Nigerian Media

The content analysis of 350 migration-related items (50 television programs, 100 online news articles, 200 social media posts) revealed a clear imbalance in narrative emphasis:

- **Success narratives** accounted for **78%** of all items.
- **Risk narratives** accounted for **12%**.
- **Neutral/policy narratives** accounted for **10%**.

Television programs were the most likely to feature success narratives (84%), often in the form of “profile” segments on successful Nigerians abroad. Online news articles had a slightly higher proportion of

neutral/policy narratives (18%) due to coverage of government migration policies and international agreements. Social media posts overwhelmingly highlighted success stories (88%), particularly through influencers showcasing lifestyle changes.

A statistical comparison across platforms (Chi-square test, $p < 0.05$) indicated a significant association between media type and narrative focus, with social media showing the strongest skew toward positive portrayals.

Audience Perceptions and Migration Intentions

Survey data from 400 respondents revealed the following:

- **Media influence:** 64% of respondents agreed that media coverage made migration appear more attractive.
- **Risk awareness:** Only 27% could recall recent media stories highlighting migration risks.
- **Migration intentions:** 52% reported that they were actively considering migration in the next 5 years; of these, 71% cited media portrayals as a contributing factor.

Urban respondents were more likely than rural respondents to report being influenced by social media ($p < 0.01$), while television was a stronger influence in rural areas.

Migrant Testimonies

The Illusion of Immediate Success

“On Instagram, I saw videos of Nigerians in Canada buying houses within a year. Nobody told me those people had been saving for 10 years or working two jobs. When I arrived, I was working in a warehouse at night and driving Uber in the day just to survive.” — **Chika**, 32, returnee from Canada.

This testimony reflects the overrepresentation of rapid success stories in social media narratives, omitting the long periods of adjustment and financial struggle.

Underreported Risks

“The TV show I watched before leaving never mentioned the detention centers in Libya. My journey through the desert ended in one of them. We were over 100 in one small room, no proper food. It was not the Europe I saw on TV.” — **Abdullahi**, 28, irregular migrant, deported from Libya.

Such experiences were absent from 88% of the analyzed media content, underscoring the information gap.

Emotional and Social Costs

“I went to the UK for my master’s degree, but I’ve missed three Christmases with my children. The loneliness is deep, but people back home just see my Facebook photos and think it’s perfect.” — **Grace**, 35, documented professional in the UK.

These narratives highlight the emotional and familial costs often missing from mainstream migration portrayals.

Lessons from Positive But Balanced Coverage

“In Ghana, I saw a documentary that showed both the success and struggles of their migrants. I think it helped me prepare mentally before I came to Dubai. Nigerian TV should do the same.” — **Ibrahim**, 30, Nigerian professional in UAE.

This aligns with comparative findings showing that balanced coverage can increase migrant preparedness and reduce unrealistic expectations.

Summary Table – Narrative Distribution by Media Type

Media Type	Success Narratives	Risk Narratives	Neutral/Policy Narratives
Television	84%	8%	8%
Online News	72%	10%	18%
Social Media	88%	7%	5%

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study confirm a pronounced imbalance in Nigerian media’s migration coverage, with a dominant emphasis on success narratives and minimal attention to risks or policy contexts. Interpreted through **Agenda-Setting Theory**, **Media Ethics**, and **Postcolonial Media Theory**, these patterns have significant implications for public perception, migration intentions, and policy discourse.

Agenda-Setting Effects in Migration Discourse

Agenda-Setting Theory posits that media shape public priorities by determining which topics and frames receive prominence. The overwhelming representation of success narratives (78% across platforms) elevates migration as a desirable and attainable life goal in the public imagination. By contrast, the scarcity of risk-focused narratives means dangers such as human trafficking, irregular border crossings, and labour exploitation are not salient in collective awareness.

This imbalance reinforces what McCombs (2014) describes as the “issue salience hierarchy,” in which certain elements of a topic dominate while others are marginalized. For Nigerian audiences, the prominence of glamorous migration stories combined with repeated exposure normalizes the idea that migration is an obvious path to socioeconomic advancement, rather than a complex decision with variable outcomes.

Ethical Considerations in Migration Reporting

From a Media Ethics perspective, the current imbalance reflects a violation of the ethical principle of fairness and comprehensiveness in reporting. The **Code of Ethics for Nigerian Journalists** calls for accuracy, balance, and the avoidance of content that could cause harm through omission. By disproportionately amplifying stories of financial success while neglecting to show the hardships, the media indirectly contribute to the harm of poorly informed migration decisions.

The testimonies in this study such as Abdullahi’s account of detention in Libya or Grace’s loneliness in the UK illustrate the lived consequences of these omissions. The absence of such narratives in mainstream coverage means potential migrants are deprived of crucial information that might lead to better preparation or even reconsideration.

Postcolonial Dimensions of Migration Narratives

Postcolonial Media Theory provides a deeper lens for understanding why success abroad is so heavily valorized. The Nigerian media’s focus on Western destinations (UK, Canada, US) and the symbolic association of “arrival” in these spaces as the pinnacle of achievement perpetuate the colonial legacy of equating Western lifestyles with superiority. This narrative framing devalues domestic achievement and reinforces a hierarchy in which “home” is positioned as a place to escape rather than improve.

The comparative case of Ghana where balanced documentaries show both the gains and the struggles of

migrants suggests that national identity and pride can coexist with honest reporting. By failing to cultivate such balance, Nigerian media inadvertently sustain what Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986) termed the “cultural captivity” of postcolonial societies, where value is defined externally rather than internally.

Cross-Platform Reinforcement

The interaction between traditional and social media intensifies the narrative imbalance. Television features create “official” success stories, which are then amplified and personalized on social media by influencers and everyday migrants. This cross-platform echo chamber gives the impression that migration success is not only common but also swift and effortless.

Survey results showing that 64% of respondents acknowledged media influence on their migration perceptions and that social media had the strongest effect on urban youth underscore the need for a coordinated, multi-platform approach to correcting the imbalance.

Policy and Public Discourse Implications

The absence of comprehensive risk reporting undermines both individual decision-making and national migration policy. Policymakers rely on public opinion to justify interventions, yet when the public discourse is skewed toward uncritical celebration of migration, it becomes harder to mobilize support for reintegration programs, anti-trafficking campaigns, or domestic economic reforms aimed at reducing push factors.

Balanced migration coverage is therefore not simply a journalistic responsibility; it is a strategic component of national development policy. The Philippine example demonstrates how integrated public information campaigns can reduce irregular migration rates while still celebrating legitimate success stories abroad.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and their interpretation, this study proposes a **three-track reform strategy** aimed at recalibrating Nigerian migration narratives for balance, accuracy, and public benefit. The recommendations target **media organizations**, **public awareness campaigns**, and **policy alignment**.

Media Practice Reforms

Editorial Policy Revision

- Media houses should adopt internal editorial guidelines that require balanced coverage of migration, mandating the inclusion of both opportunities and risks in every migration-related story.
- This can be modeled after the **BBC Editorial Guidelines on Coverage of Conflict**, adapted for migration reporting to ensure comprehensive fact-checking and contextual balance.

Inclusion of Indigenous Success Narratives

- Broadcast and online platforms should feature Nigerians who have achieved significant success domestically, particularly in rural development, entrepreneurship, and innovation sectors.
- This reframes the idea of success to include “homegrown” achievements, countering the postcolonial bias toward Western-based success stories.

Journalist Training

- Professional associations like the **Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ)** should provide mandatory annual training on ethical migration reporting, incorporating modules on human rights, data literacy, and cross-cultural sensitivity.

Public Awareness and Media Literacy

National Media Literacy Campaign

- The **National Orientation Agency (NOA)**, in partnership with civil society groups, should implement a sustained media literacy program that teaches audiences how to critically evaluate migration content.
- Target youth audiences in secondary schools, universities, and NYSC programs, focusing on skills to discern incomplete or misleading narratives.

Balanced Social Media Influencer Engagement

- Partner with high-reach Nigerian influencers to produce series that juxtapose real-life migration challenges with successes.
- Government grants or NGO sponsorship can incentivize creators to adopt more balanced content strategies.

Diaspora Storytelling Platforms

- Create digital platforms for returnees and diaspora Nigerians to share their stories, both positive and challenging, through short films, podcasts, and interactive forums.

Policy and Institutional Alignment

Government–Media Partnerships

- Integrate balanced migration reporting into the mandates of the **Federal Ministry of Information and Culture** and the **Ministry of Labour and Employment**.
- Encourage collaborative reporting projects between Nigerian journalists and international agencies like the **IOM** and **UNHCR**.

Monitoring and Accountability

- Establish a public migration coverage index to track the proportion of success vs. risk narratives across Nigerian media platforms.
- Publish quarterly reports to encourage transparency and competition among outlets to maintain ethical standards.

International Best Practice Adoption

- Adapt the **Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA)** media partnership model, which ensures that pre-departure orientation seminars include exposure to media content depicting both the advantages and the risks of working abroad.

Implementation Outlook:

If systematically implemented, this three-track reform strategy could, within 5–10 years:

- Reduce irregular migration attempts by increasing public risk awareness.
- Improve preparedness among prospective migrants, leading to higher integration success rates abroad.
- Strengthen domestic confidence in Nigerian-based opportunities, slowing the “Japa” brain drain trend.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine the Nigerian media's portrayal of migration, revealing a pervasive imbalance that favors success narratives while underrepresenting the risks, challenges, and policy dimensions of migration. Through a cross-platform content analysis, audience perception surveys, and in-depth migrant testimonies, the research demonstrated how this skewed framing shapes public perceptions, fuels migration aspirations, and sustains postcolonial ideals that equate success with relocation to the West.

Interpreted through **Agenda-Setting Theory**, the findings highlight how repeated exposure to one-sided narratives elevates migration as a priority topic in the public sphere, crowding out discussion of domestic opportunities. **Media Ethics Theory** underscores the professional obligation to present balanced and comprehensive reporting, an obligation that is currently unmet in the Nigerian context.

Finally, **Postcolonial Media Theory** illuminates how migration discourse perpetuates symbolic hierarchies between “here” and “there,” reinforcing a cultural preference for foreign achievement. The migrant testimonies woven into the analysis underscore the real human consequences of this imbalance: individuals leaving with inflated expectations, facing unanticipated hardships, and, in some cases, returning home disillusioned. The absence of such realities in mainstream coverage is not a neutral omission, it is an ethical and developmental gap.

The recommendations offered from editorial reforms to nationwide media literacy campaigns and policy-media partnerships provide a roadmap for recalibrating migration narratives. Balanced reporting can coexist with the celebration of genuine success stories, as demonstrated by comparative examples from the Philippines and Ghana.

Ultimately, the Nigerian media must move beyond broadcasting the dream to broadcasting the truth. By doing so, they will empower citizens to make informed migration decisions, contribute to more effective migration governance, and help redefine success in ways that value achievement at home as much as abroad.

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