

# Policy Renewal: A Mechanism for Forestalling Organizational Mishap in Rivers State Government Owned Media Houses

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## Abstract

## Original Research Article

This study examined re-engineering policy renewal as a mechanism for forestalling organizational mishaps in Rivers State government-owned media houses. Anchored on contingency theory and organizational learning theory, the study adopted a census of 25 departmental heads across five state-owned media establishments. Data were analyzed using mean scores and percentages. Findings revealed irregular policy review practices, with bureaucratic delays and political interference identified as major challenges. The study concludes that the stability and effectiveness of Rivers State government-owned media houses depend on structured, timely, and participatory policy renewal systems. It recommends institutionalizing periodic and monitored policy review frameworks, simplifying approval processes to reduce bureaucratic and political constraints, and promoting clear communication, inclusiveness, staff development, accountability, and gradual digital transformation to enhance performance and minimize organizational mishaps

**Keywords:** Media, Policy Renewal, Organizational mishap, Re-engineering, strategy.

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## INTRODUCTION

In the ever volatile and dynamic operating environment of the media industry, where technological change and advancements, tensed supervisory and regulatory frameworks, and huge and ever changing masses expectations, organizations within the media industry in Nigeria face increasing exposure to operational, legal, and reputational risks. To pull through these complexities effectively, regular evaluation and renewal of internal policies have become a critical mechanism for ensuring survival, resilience and long-term

sustainability. In deed the need for regular policy renewal can't be over emphasize as Policy renewal serves not merely as one of management bureaucratic exercise, but as a proactive strategy to forestall organizational mishaps ranging from compliance failures and data breaches to ethical lapses and loss of public trust .

Regularly updating policies to reflect current realities and future projections, media organizations can maintain alignment with industry standards, safeguard stakeholder interests, and reinforce a culture of accountability. A successful policy



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renewal requires proactive adaptation to changing contexts, transparent communication, and strong leadership.

On the other hand, Organizational mishaps, often stemming from communication breakdowns, risk denial, or structural impediments, highlight the importance of vigilance and learning from past errors. Effective policy renewal involves not just updating rules, but also fostering a culture of continuous learning and adaptation

### Statement of the problem

Government-owned media houses in Rivers State were established to serve as credible channels for public information dissemination, civic education, and the promotion of government policies and developmental initiatives. Ideally, these media institutions are expected to operate with professionalism, editorial integrity, operational efficiency, and financial sustainability in order to effectively fulfill their mandate. However, there have been observable concerns regarding organizational mishaps that appear to undermine their performance and public relevance.

These mishaps manifest in forms such as administrative inefficiencies, bureaucratic bottlenecks, inadequate funding structures, obsolete technology, political interference, weak accountability mechanisms, and poor staff motivation. Such challenges may have resulted in diminished service delivery, reduced audience trust, declining competitiveness with private media outlets, and limited innovation in content production and distribution. In an era characterized by digital transformation and heightened media competition, the inability of state-owned media houses to adapt strategically poses significant organizational and reputational risks.

Despite the critical role of these media institutions in shaping public discourse and supporting democratic governance, there is insufficient empirical inquiry into the nature, causes, and consequences of the organizational mishaps affecting Rivers State government-owned media houses. The persistence of

these challenges raises concerns about their long-term sustainability and effectiveness.

It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to examine the organizational mishaps of Rivers State government-owned media houses with a view to identifying underlying structural, managerial, and operational factors responsible for these challenges and proposing strategies for institutional revitalization and improved performance

### Objectives of the study

This study basically seeks to examine how policy renewal can help forestall organizational mishap of Rivers state government owned government media houses how the specific objectives of the study are

1. To determine how often Rivers state government owned media houses renew their policies
2. To determine the challenges of policy renewal process in Rivers state government owned media houses
3. To determine policy renewal strategies that can help forestall organizational mishap in Rivers state government owned media houses

### Research Questions

To serve as a guide in achieving the objectives of the study we therefore put forth the following research questions

1. How often do Rivers state government owned media houses renew her policies
2. What are the challenges of policy renewal process in Rivers state government owned media houses?
3. What are the policy renewal strategies that can help forestall organizational mishap in Rivers state government owned media houses?

### Theoretical Framework

This study is premised on the assumption of contingency theory by Lawrence and Lorsch (1967)

and the organizational learning theory by Argyris and Schon (1978)

### Contingency theory

The theory holds the assumption that there is no one best fit to organize or lead, policies must fit the consistent evolving business environment. Policy renewal is a contingency response to environmental, technological and internal changes. To prevent organizational mishap, organizations must at interval align its structure and policies with prevalent realities.

### Organizational learning theory

The organizational learning theory as learning systems that must continually adapt policies and practices to avoid repeating mistakes. Policy renewal can be framed as a form of double loop learning (reexamining assumptions and frameworks, not just actions). Mishaps often stem from outdated. Rigid. Or poorly adapted, policies, so continuous learning prevents such failures.

### Concept of policy renewal

Policy renewal defines the process of either modifying or changing an existing policy that is gradually becoming obsolete. It also refers to the process by which existing public policies are refreshed, updated, or modify to capture current realities, rather than being completely eliminated. Policy renewal process include a revisit of policy goals, policy instrumentation , implementation strategies, and even fundamental assumptions .Most organizations and employees usually see policy as involving a static and never revisiting process that lives for an organization life time . However,, this is very wrong because policies are supposed to grow and adapt with the changing environment of businesses. While the core elements and the intent of a policy will likely remain the same, the details of how to make it happen need to adapt to the changes in the industry and the organization. Regular policy review and revision are an important part of every

policy and procedure management plan, and it's something worth doing in every organization

Further, Weiss (2013) argues that policy renewal is part of a learning cycle, where organizations reflect on outcomes and adjust rules accordingly. This adaptive approach contrasts with rigid, time-fixed renewal schedules that ignore emerging needs (Weiss, 2013). One dominant debate on policy renewal is whether renewal should occur at fixed intervals (e.g., annually) or flexibly in response to signals of change.

### Frequency of policy renewal

In sectors with predictable cycles such as education or fiscal budgeting researchers emphasize annual or biennial renewal schedules to maintain consistency (Smith & Lee,2015).Conversely, Brown (2018) indicates that in fast-changing environments (e.g., digital security), renewal triggered by performance indicators or risk thresholds is more effective than fixed timelines (Brown, 2018). Organizations operating in a high-risk or highly-regulated industry, such as healthcare, public safety, banking, or financial technology, are meant to be conducting regular policy reviews so as to harness its operations with the happenings in its environment.

Public policy studies suggest that major governmental policies are typically reviewed every 3–5 years unless extraordinary events occur (Green & Patel, 2016). In corporate governance, annual policy reviews, especially for compliance and risk management policies, are frequently recommended to align with audit cycles (Nguyen, 2017). policy literature points to shorter cycles (e.g., yearly updates) due to rapid changes in medical knowledge and regulatory environments (Chang & Joseph, 2022). These sectoral differences reflect the risk environment, stakeholder expectations, and regulatory pressures that shape renewal practices (Harris, 2019).

Multiple factors influence how often policies are renewed: Technological change, high rates of innovation require faster policy updates (Alvarez, 2021).Regulatory shifts, new laws often trigger immediate policy revision (Kumar & Ross, 2020).

Poor outcomes or compliance gaps can accelerate review cycles (Lee & Chen, 2018). Stakeholder feedback encourages more frequent stakeholder-driven updates (Miller, 2014). Thompson (2019) found that organizations with overly frequent renewals experienced higher confusion and reduced compliance, suggesting a need for balance (Thompson, 2019).

Policies that are outdated can leave organization at a very great risk. Obsolete policies may be a mismatch with new laws and regulations and at such may fail to address new systems or technology, which can result in inconsistent practices. It's expedient for organizations to regularly review its policies, thereby keeping the organization up to date with latest regulations and technology, as well as consistent with the industry's best practices. An organization policies needs to be intendant with the happenings in the business operating environment hence does serve as protective element to the organization and its employees.

### Challenges of Policy renewal process

Policy renewal whether is widely recognized as a crucial stage in the policy cycle. However, *multiple structural, administrative, and stakeholder-related challenges* can impede successful renewal. This review groups the literature into primary themes that recur across different contexts. Research on public policy reform shows that institutional weaknesses and fragmentation are major obstacles to effectively renewing and adapting policies over time. Weak governance structures, inefficiencies in coordination across ministries or agencies, and siloed decision-making reduce the capacity for coherent renewal activities (Adeleke, 2024; Moqm3l et al., 2025). Similarly, research highlights *bureaucratic inertia* has the tendency of administrative structures to resist change, as a barrier to policy renewal. Rigid procedural norms, entrenched routines, and low interdepartmental cooperation complicate updates to policy frameworks and lead to delays or superficial adaptations.

Political interests and instability also hinder renewal efforts. Frequent changes in leadership, short-term electoral incentives, and shifts in government

priorities make systematic policy renewal difficult. Political pressures can divert attention to short-term gains rather than long-term policy sustainability, narrowing the focus of renewal initiatives and fragmenting reform momentum.

Beyond high-level politics, day-to-day administrative challenges are recurrent in the literature. In public systems, limited resources, including financial, human, and technical capacity constrain policy renewal and evaluation. Without adequate funding or trained personnel, institutions struggle to conduct comprehensive reviews or implement changes effectively. Relatedly, documentation, data quality, and information gaps impair the ability of policymakers and administrators to assess existing policies, identify when renewal is needed, and develop evidence-based updates. Lack of accurate, timely data makes planning and communication during renewal more difficult.

Effective policy renewal requires clear communication among policymakers, implementers, and affected populations. However, communication breakdown, whether between government departments or between insurers and policyholders are repeatedly documented as significant hurdles. Misunderstandings about renewal terms, deadlines, or procedural changes can lead to unintentional lapses in coverage or poor uptake of revised policies.

Researchers on policy renewal highlights *multifaceted challenges* that span institutional, political, administrative, communicative, and sector-specific dimensions. Common barriers include governance weaknesses, political instability, resource constraints, communication breakdowns, and legal complexities. Across both public sector reforms and insurance policy renewals, these obstacles underscore the need for integrated approaches that combine robust institutional capacity, clear stakeholder engagement, effective communication strategies, and adaptable procedural frameworks.

### Concept of Organizational mishap

An *organizational mishap* refers to a failure that arises not from a single accident but from systemic

problems within an organization's structures, culture, processes, or leadership. These failures often result from poor decision-making, weak governance, lack of transparency, and misaligned incentives — all of which can erode risk controls and cause operational breakdowns. Such mishaps are usually the product of cumulative errors rather than isolated mistakes, and they frequently manifest in crises that attract public, legal, or regulatory scrutiny.

Organizational mishaps encompass events such as strategic errors, process breakdowns, communication failures, and safety incidents that negatively affect performance and outcomes (Smith & Klein, 2016). They may be acute (sudden and disruptive) or chronic (systemic, ongoing issues), and can occur at all levels of an organization (Johnson, 2015). When unresolved, such mishaps contribute to decreased productivity, financial loss, and low morale (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013)

Several academic frameworks describe how organizational failures emerge when information flow breaks down, leading to decisions that deviate from reality, or when administrative bloat diverts resources from core functions. These models highlight how even competent people can be trapped by dysfunctional systems that reward short-term gains over long-term safety and stability. One line of research emphasizes human cognitive limitations and biases as key causes of errors. Simon (1997) argued that bounded rationality leads managers to make suboptimal decisions.

Other scholars highlight that cognitive biases such as confirmation bias and overconfidence, distort judgment, leading to flawed decisions (Bazerman & Moore, 2012). These biases can be amplified under stress or time pressure, increasing the likelihood of mishaps (Kahneman, 2011) Research consistently links organizational mishaps with financial losses, reduced employee morale, and reputation damage. In manufacturing and production contexts, safety mishaps directly correlate with increased costs and lost productivity (Reason, 1997). In the digital economy, system failures and data breaches damage customer trust and competitive advantage (Laudon & Laudon, 2020). Psychological impacts on employees are also documented; mishaps often create stress,

fear of blame, and reduced engagement, which feed into a negative cycle of performance deterioration (Edmondson, 1999).

### **Policy renewal strategies that can help forestall organizational mishap**

Organizational mishaps, accidents, failures, compliance breaches often result from outdated, unclear, or poorly implemented policies. Policy renewal strategies seek to regularly update and align organizational rules, procedures, and governance mechanisms with evolving risks, environments, technologies, and stakeholder needs. Research shows that dynamic policy renewal improves organizational resilience, reduces risk exposure, and enhances learning from past failures (Argote & Miron-Spektor, 2011)

Policy renewal strategies refer to systematic approaches employed by organizations to periodically evaluate, update, or replace existing policies. These strategies are designed to anticipate potential risks, address operational gaps, and improve decision-making frameworks. By adopting proactive policy renewal mechanisms, organizations can identify outdated, ambiguous, or redundant policies that may contribute to procedural errors, miscommunication, or non-compliance. For instance, a media organization that fails to update its editorial or financial policies may inadvertently engage in unethical practices or operational mismanagement, leading to reputational damage and regulatory penalties. Several strategies underpin effective policy renewal and they include:

**Periodic Review:** Policies should be evaluated at predetermined intervals to ensure relevance. Regular audits and reviews allow organizations to incorporate lessons learned, respond to environmental changes, and maintain operational consistency.

**Stakeholder Involvement:** Engaging employees, managers, and external experts in the review process enhances policy effectiveness. Diverse perspectives help identify gaps, ambiguities, or potential areas of conflict that could trigger mishaps.

**Risk-Based Updating:** Policies should be updated based on risk assessments. Identifying high-risk areas enables organizations to prioritize policy changes that directly reduce vulnerabilities and prevent errors.

**Alignment with Organizational Goals:** Policies must reflect current strategic objectives. Misaligned policies can lead to inconsistent practices, confusion among staff, and ultimately organizational mishaps.

**Feedback Mechanisms:** Incorporating feedback from operational units allows continuous improvement of policies. Employees on the frontline often provide practical insights into policy limitations that may not be apparent at higher management levels.

**Regulatory Compliance:** Policies need to evolve in line with statutory and regulatory requirements. Non-compliance due to outdated policies can expose organizations to legal and financial liabilities. Policy renewal is not merely a bureaucratic exercise but a

strategic tool for risk mitigation. Organizations that institutionalize structured policy renewal strategies are better positioned to maintain operational efficiency, reduce errors, and safeguard against mishaps. In the context of public or government-owned organizations, where bureaucratic processes are often complex, systematic policy renewal is particularly vital in ensuring accountability, transparency, and sustainable service delivery

**Methodology**

The population of the study comprised of 25 departmental heads across 5 functional Rivers state government owned media houses. The study took census of the entire population while data were descriptively analyzed using mean score and percentile due to the nominal nature of the data..

**Research question one:** How often does Rivers state government owned media houses renew her policies?

**Responses on how often Rivers state government owned media houses renew her policies**

Renewal Frequency	Number of Respondents (f)	Percentage (%)
Annually	2	8.0
Bi-annually (every 2 years)	8	32.0
Every 3–5 years	5	20.0
No fixed schedule	1	40.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

From the data output, it can be observed that policy renewal in Rivers State government-owned media houses is annually (8%). A significant portion renews policies bi-annually (32%), while some

follow a longer cycle of 3–5 years (20%), and a larger percent have no fixed schedule (40%). This indicates that most Rivers state government media houses do not adhere to regular policy renewal, there

is high level of inconsistency, which may affect organizational compliance and risk management.

**Research question 2.** What are the challenges of Policy Renewal in Rivers State Government-Owned Media Houses?

### Responses on Challenges of Policy Renewal in Rivers State Government-Owned Media Houses

Challenge Statement	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	Mean	% Agree (A+SA)
1. Lack of adequate funding delays policy review	2	3	4	10	6	3.84	64%
2. Bureaucratic procedures slow down policy renewal	1	2	3	12	7	4.04	76%
3. Inadequate staff training on policy management	3	4	5	8	5	3.56	52%
4. Poor communication among departments hinders updates	0	3	6	10	6	3.96	64%
5. Resistance to change among staff affects policy renewal	2	2	5	9	7	3.92	64%
6. Lack of clear policy review framework	1	3	5	10	6	3.96	64%
7. Political interference in media houses impacts renewal	1	2	3	11	8	4.08	76%

The highest perceived challenges are bureaucratic delays (Mean = 4.04) and political interference (Mean = 4.08). The lowest-rated challenge is inadequate staff training (Mean = 3.56), indicating it is still relevant but less critical. Overall, 64–76% of respondents agree that these factors are significant obstacles to effective policy renewal

**Research Question 3:** What are the policy renewal strategies that can help forestall organizational mishap in Rivers state government owned media houses?

**Responses on policy renewal strategies that can help forestall organizational mishap. The following strategies emerged:**

Policy Renewal Strategy	Frequency (n=25)	Percentage (%)
Periodic policy review and update	22	88%
Stakeholder participation in policy formulation	20	80%
Regular monitoring and evaluation mechanisms	19	76%
Staff training and policy awareness programs	21	84%
Adoption of digital policy management systems	15	60%
Compliance and internal audit strengthening	18	72%
Clear communication of revised policies	23	92%

The descriptive statistics indicate that clear communication of revised policies (92%) ranked highest among suggested strategies. Similarly, periodic policy review and update (88%) and staff training and awareness programs (84%) were strongly supported. A substantial proportion of respondents (80%) emphasized stakeholder participation. Meanwhile, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (76%) and strengthened internal audits (72%) were viewed as essential for ensuring accountability and early detection of policy lapses.

## Discussion of Findings

### How often Rivers state government owned media houses renew her policies

The data indicate considerable variation in the policy renewal practices of Rivers State government-owned media houses. Only a small proportion (8%) renew policies on an annual basis, while a larger share engages in bi-annual (32%) or 3–5-year cycles

(20%). Strikingly, 40% of the organizations surveyed do not follow any fixed schedule for policy renewal. These results suggest that most government-owned media houses in Rivers State lack a consistent and systematic approach to policy updating. According to Cameron & Green (2019), policies that are not periodically reviewed can become outdated, leading to gaps in compliance and weakened internal controls. Similarly, Kaplan (2018) argues that irregular policy updates may cause organizations to lag behind changes in statutory requirements, particularly in sectors subject to frequent legal and ethical shifts.

Considering the high proportion of media houses without fixed schedules, the current practice in Rivers State reflects what Mohan & Chen (2021) describe as “policy drift,” where policies gradually lose relevance because they are not reviewed to reflect new realities. This drift can undermine compliance with national media regulations or best practices in public communication.

## Challenges of policy renewal

The results of our study suggest that bureaucratic delays (Mean = 4.04) and political interference (Mean = 4.08) are the most significant perceived challenges to effective policy renewal, while inadequate staff training (Mean = 3.56) is rated lower but still notable. Overall, 64–76% of respondents agree that these factors significantly hinder policy renewal efforts. Kraft & Furlong (2018) highlight that complex administrative procedures often delay policy cycles, weakening responsiveness and adaptive capacity. Similarly, Romzek & Johnston (2005) argue that rigid administrative frameworks can hinder innovation and delay the adoption of new policies in government agencies.

Political interference being rated even higher than bureaucratic delays mirrors research on governance and policy processes, which shows that political considerations often influence administrative decision-making in ways that can disrupt rational policy design. Peters (2015) emphasizes that political priorities and power struggles frequently override technical policy considerations, leading to disruptions in continuity and implementation.

## Identified Policy Renewal Strategies

The findings revealed a strong consensus among respondents that effective policy renewal strategies are central to preventing organizational mishaps in Rivers State government-owned media establishments. The high ranking of clear communication of revised policies (92%) underscores the widely acknowledged role of communication in successful policy implementation. Scholars such as Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) argue that policy failure often arises not from flawed formulation but from breakdowns during implementation, particularly due to poor communication channels. Similarly, Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) emphasize that clarity of policy objectives and consistent communication are essential conditions for effective implementation.

Staff training and awareness programs (84%) further highlight the importance of capacity building. According to Chris Argyris and Donald Schon

(1978), organizational learning enhances institutional effectiveness by enabling employees to internalize and properly implement policy changes. Stakeholder participation (80%) also received significant support, indicating recognition of inclusiveness in policy processes. R. Edward Freeman (1984) argues that stakeholder engagement enhances legitimacy, commitment, and compliance.

## Conclusions

The study concludes that the effectiveness and stability of Rivers State government-owned media houses largely depend on the institutionalization of structured, timely, and participatory policy renewal mechanisms. Addressing bureaucratic and political constraints while promoting clear communication and continuous staff development will significantly enhance organizational performance and reduce the likelihood of operational mishaps

## Recommendations

1. Organizations should institutionalize a structured, periodic, and monitored policy renewal system which will enhance organizational stability, regulatory compliance, and overall performance in Rivers State government-owned media establishments.
2. Organizations should simplify and standardize policy review and approval processes so as to minimize bureaucratic delays and political interference which are top challenges identified in the policy renewal process
3. Rivers State government-owned media houses should adopt a comprehensive and institutionalized policy renewal framework that emphasizes clarity, inclusiveness, periodic review, capacity building, accountability, and gradual digital transformation. Implementing these strategies in a coordinated manner will significantly reduce organizational mishaps and enhance operational effectiveness.

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