

Assessment of Indigenous Language Programming in Promoting Yoruba Language and Culture: Evidence from Sobi FM 101.9 Ilorin, Nigeria

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Abstract

Background: Indigenous language broadcasting constitutes one of the most consequential yet underexamined mechanisms for preserving cultural heritage and sustaining community identity in postcolonial African societies. In Nigeria, where English continues to function as the official medium of formal communication, the linguistic terrain of broadcast media carries both symbolic and political weight that extends well beyond programme scheduling decisions.

Method: This study adopted a quantitative content analysis design to examine indigenous language programming at Sobi FM 101.9 Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. A total of 157 coded programme entries drawn from the station's broadcast schedule were systematically analysed according to three primary variables: language of broadcast, programme genre, and thematic focus. Descriptive statistics, comprising frequencies and percentages, were employed for data analysis.

Results: Findings revealed a pronounced dominance of Yoruba-language content across the station's programming schedule. Yoruba-language broadcasts accounted for 143 entries (91.1%), while English-language programming constituted 14 entries (8.9%). Indigenous language broadcasting featured prominently across content categories, including current affairs, religious programming, agricultural education, health communication, sports commentary, and cultural entertainment. Thematic analysis further indicated that language preservation and cultural heritage transmission constituted the dominant thematic orientations across coded entries.

Conclusion: Sobi FM 101.9 occupies a meaningful position in the promotion and preservation of Yoruba language and cultural heritage. The study concludes that community radio, when oriented deliberately toward indigenous language content, functions as an active agent of cultural transmission rather than a passive conduit of information. Theoretical grounding in Cultural Transmission Theory illuminates the mechanisms through which radio facilitates intergenerational transfer of linguistic and cultural knowledge.

Keywords: indigenous language broadcasting, Yoruba language, cultural preservation, community radio, Sobi FM, Nigeria, Cultural Transmission Theory, content analysis

1. Introduction

Language is not simply a medium through which human beings exchange information. It is, at a more fundamental level, the architecture of meaning itself, the structure through which communities organise memory, transmit knowledge across generations, and negotiate their relationship with the world. When a language contracts or disappears, what is lost is not merely a set of phonological rules and grammatical conventions; what is lost is an entire way of knowing. This recognition, once confined largely to the margins of academic linguistics, has gained considerable currency in recent decades, as the accelerating pace of language shift has pushed the question of linguistic survival into the domain of public policy, media studies, and cultural rights advocacy (UNESCO, 2021).

Nigeria's linguistic landscape is one of the most complex in the world. The country is home to over 520 documented languages, among which Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo occupy the largest demographic and political footprints (Ethnologue, 2023). Yet complexity of this scale also implies vulnerability. Smaller languages have been declining steadily under the combined pressure of urbanisation, formal education conducted almost entirely in English, and a media environment historically weighted toward the official colonial language. Even within the three dominant language groups, the question of vitality is no longer straightforward. Afolabi and Igboanusi (2024) document a

pattern of accelerating attrition in the Yoruba language domain, including a measurable retreat from broadcast media, one of the primary public spaces in which a language either asserts its relevance or concedes it.

Radio, in this context, occupies a uniquely significant position. It reaches audiences that television and the internet often cannot: rural communities, older populations, low-literacy adults, and those who navigate daily life in languages that print and digital media largely ignore. In the Nigerian setting, community and commercial radio stations that broadcast in indigenous languages do not merely serve an audience; they constitute, in a meaningful sense, one of the last regular institutional spaces in which those languages are heard, used, and modelled for younger speakers. The stakes are not merely cultural but broadly social and political. A community that cannot access health information, civic education, or agricultural guidance in its own language is a community that faces structural disadvantage layered on top of linguistic marginalisation (Rauf et al., 2023).

Sobi FM 101.9 Ilorin, the station at the centre of this study, is a community-oriented radio broadcaster operating in the capital of Kwara State, a region that sits at the historically contested intersection of Yoruba, Nupe, and Fulani cultural influences. Ilorin's linguistic identity has itself been the subject of longstanding debate, given the city's complex history of emirate rule and its ambiguous relationship to both Yoruba cultural orthodoxy and northern Nigerian political culture (Adewale, 2021). Against this background, Sobi FM's orientation toward Yoruba-language broadcasting is not a neutral editorial choice. It is a positioning decision with cultural, political, and community dimensions that deserve systematic academic attention. Yet empirical studies of the station's programming practices and their implications for Yoruba language preservation have remained sparse. This study addresses that absence directly.

Drawing on a quantitative content analysis of 157 coded programme entries from Sobi FM's broadcast schedule, and grounded theoretically in Cultural Transmission Theory, this paper examines the extent and character of indigenous language programming at the station, assesses the programme genres and thematic orientations through which Yoruba language and culture are represented, and situates these findings within the broader scholarly conversation about radio's role in language and cultural preservation. The objective is not simply to document what the station does, but to analyse what its programming practices mean, for language policy, for cultural theory, and for the communities that tune in.

II. Literature Review

A. Indigenous Language Broadcasting and Cultural Preservation

The relationship between broadcast media and language vitality has been theorised from several disciplinary angles, each of which captures something important while leaving something out. Sociolinguists have tended to focus on language use patterns, domain distribution, and the conditions under which a language gains or loses speakers across generations. Media scholars have approached the question through the lens of content, representation, and agenda-setting. Political economists have examined the structural conditions, ownership, regulation, market pressures, that determine which languages receive airtime and which do not. What has emerged from this triangulation is a fairly robust consensus: broadcast media, and radio in particular, plays a meaningful role in shaping the perceived status and vitality of a language, and that role is neither automatic nor guaranteed (Cormack, 2020).

Languages that achieve presence in broadcast media benefit from what might be called symbolic legitimisation, a public affirmation that the language is appropriate for the full range of human concerns, from the serious to the playful, from the urgent to the mundane. This legitimisation effect has been documented in studies of Welsh-language broadcasting in Wales (Jones & Uribe-Jongbloed, 2022), Maori broadcasting in New Zealand (Meredith, 2021), and indigenous-language radio in Latin America (Salazar, 2020). The pattern is consistent: communities whose languages receive sustained, high-quality broadcast presence report higher rates of language pride, greater intergenerational transmission, and more robust participation in language-related cultural events. The causal direction is

not simple, broadcasting is part of a wider sociolinguistic ecology rather than a silver bullet, but the contribution is real and documentable.

In the African context, the picture is complicated by colonial legacies that positioned European languages as the media of education, governance, and formal public life, while indigenous languages were relegated to the domestic, informal, and oral domain. The postcolonial state inherited these arrangements and, in many cases, reinforced them. Nigeria's broadcasting history is illustrative: state broadcasters created during the colonial period initially operated almost exclusively in English, and it was only through sustained pressure from cultural advocates and, later, from commercial imperatives that indigenous-language programming gained meaningful representation on the airwaves (Etim, 2022). Community and commercial radio stations that have since oriented their programming toward indigenous languages represent, in this sense, a partial reversal of an inherited structural bias, though the degree to which this reversal is sustained, systematic, and oriented toward genuine cultural promotion varies enormously from station to station.

B. Radio and Language Vitality in Nigeria

Nigeria's broadcasting sector has expanded considerably since deregulation in the 1990s, with the proliferation of privately owned radio stations introducing a competitive dynamic that has, in many markets, favoured indigenous-language programming as a strategy for audience differentiation. Stations broadcasting in Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo have achieved substantial listenership, particularly in rural and peri-urban areas where literacy rates are lower and English proficiency is limited (Rabiu et al., 2022). This commercial logic has, somewhat paradoxically, aligned with the cultural preservation agenda, though the alignment is incomplete. Commercially motivated indigenous-language programming does not necessarily prioritise cultural depth, linguistic richness, or thematic content oriented toward heritage transmission. A programme that uses Yoruba primarily as a vehicle for entertainment or advertising does something different, epistemologically and culturally, from one that uses Yoruba to discuss farming practices, oral literature, or ceremonial traditions.

The distinction matters because not all indigenous-language broadcasting is equivalent in its cultural effects. Rauf et al. (2023) draw a useful analytical distinction between what they term "instrumental" indigenous-language use, where the language is a delivery mechanism for content that could equally well be expressed in English, and "cultural" indigenous-language use, where the content itself is constitutively tied to the language in which it is expressed. Proverbs, folktales, praise poetry, and agricultural knowledge encoded in indigenous terminology fall into the latter category. When radio broadcasting incorporates content of this kind, it does something that cannot simply be replicated by switching to English; the cultural information is embedded in the linguistic form itself. Sobi FM's programming, as the analysis in this study will show, demonstrates this distinction across several genre categories.

Afolabi and Igboanusi (2024) offer a particularly germane analysis of Yoruba-language radio broadcasting, documenting both the quantitative presence of Yoruba on air and the qualitative dimensions of how the language is used, the register, the degree of code-switching, the extent to which programmes draw on oral tradition and cultural reference. Their findings suggest that while Yoruba-language radio has maintained a significant presence in the broadcast schedules of southwestern Nigerian stations, the depth of cultural engagement varies significantly, with some programmes maintaining rigorous Yoruba-language use while others default to extensive English code-switching, particularly in technical domains. This heterogeneity within indigenous-language broadcasting is one of the analytic tensions this study seeks to address.

C. Content Analysis as a Method for Assessing Broadcasting Practices

Content analysis has a long and established history as a method for examining broadcast media. Its application to indigenous-language broadcasting contexts, however, remains relatively underdeveloped. Most existing studies have focused on language policy analysis, audience perception surveys, or qualitative case studies of specific programmes or broadcasters. Systematic quantitative

examination of broadcast schedules, examining the distribution of language use, genre categories, and thematic orientations across a station's full programming output, provides a different kind of evidence: one that is less sensitive to the self-presentation effects of interview-based methods and more capable of revealing structural patterns in editorial practice (Neuendorf, 2022).

Holsti's (1969) foundational framework for content analysis, subsequently refined by Krippendorff (2019) and Neuendorf (2022), provides the methodological scaffolding for this study's approach. The coding scheme developed for this analysis operationalises three primary variables, language of broadcast, programme genre, and thematic focus, in ways that allow for both quantitative tabulation and interpretive contextualisation. Inter-coder reliability was assessed using Cohen's kappa, yielding coefficients that meet the threshold for acceptable reliability (> 0.80) across all three variable categories. The result is an empirically grounded account of Sobi FM's programming practices that is both descriptively precise and analytically tractable.

III. Theoretical Framework

A. Cultural Transmission Theory

Cultural Transmission Theory, as articulated in its foundational form by Cavalli-Sforza and Feldman (1981) and subsequently developed within communication studies by scholars including Tomasello (2019) and Kashima (2022), holds that cultural knowledge, encompassing language, values, beliefs, practices, and social norms, is transferred across generations and between social groups through structured communicative processes. The theory distinguishes between vertical transmission (from parent to child across generations), horizontal transmission (between peers within a generation), and oblique transmission (from non-parental adults or institutions to the younger generation). Each of these pathways contributes to cultural continuity in different ways and is susceptible to disruption by different forces.

Broadcast media, and radio, function as a primary channel of oblique transmission. When a radio station broadcasts in an indigenous language, it positions that language as a legitimate medium for the full range of public discourse, news, health information, cultural entertainment, religious programming, agricultural guidance, and thereby reinforces its social standing for listeners across age cohorts. For younger listeners, this representational presence communicates something important about the language's contemporary relevance and status. For older listeners, it provides affirmation of cultural identity and, potentially, a resource for reinforcing vertical transmission within the household (Tomasello, 2019).

Kashima (2022) extends the theory to account for the role of media in what he terms "cultural dynamics", the ongoing processes of reproduction, transformation, and innovation through which cultures adapt to changing social conditions while maintaining recognisable continuity. From this perspective, indigenous-language broadcasting is not simply a passive mirror of cultural practices that exist elsewhere; it is an active participant in cultural dynamics, capable of influencing which aspects of a culture are reproduced, which are transformed, and which fade from public view. Sobi FM's editorial choices, which genres it develops in Yoruba, which thematic territories it occupies, which cultural references it draws on and amplifies, are, from this theoretical standpoint, consequential decisions about cultural reproduction that extend well beyond the station's immediate commercial or communicative purposes.

The theoretical framework also draws selectively on Fishman's (1991) Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS), a diagnostic tool for assessing the degree of intergenerational language disruption in a speech community. While GIDS was not designed as a framework for broadcasting research specifically, its emphasis on the domains in which a language is used, and the role of institutional presence in sustaining those domains, aligns productively with the analytical concerns of this study. Broadcast media represents precisely the kind of institutional domain presence that Fishman identifies as critical for language maintenance: it is public, regular, authoritative, and accessible to a wide demographic range. A station that broadcasts extensively and

diversely in Yoruba contributes, on Fishman's account, to the maintenance of Yoruba as a living, multi-domain language rather than one retreating toward purely domestic and informal use.

IV. Methodology

A. Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative content analysis design. Content analysis was selected as the primary methodological approach because of its capacity to generate systematic, replicable, and verifiable evidence about broadcast practices from primary programme schedule data, evidence that is not dependent on the self-reports of broadcasters or the perceptions of audiences, and that can be subjected to formal reliability assessment. The design follows the procedural framework established by Neuendorf (2022) and refined for media content contexts by Riffe et al. (2019).

B. Research Site and Data Source

Sobi FM 101.9 is a licensed commercial radio broadcaster operating in Ilorin, the capital of Kwara State, in north-central Nigeria. The station targets a predominantly Yoruba-speaking audience in Ilorin and its environs, a demographic context that is linguistically and culturally significant given Ilorin's status as a Yoruba-speaking city governed for most of its history within a Hausa-Fulani emirate political structure. The station's programming schedule was obtained directly from the station's management as part of a formally conducted research partnership, ensuring that the data reflects the station's actual broadcast output rather than a publicly available edited version.

C. Sampling and Unit of Analysis

The population of the study comprised all programme entries in Sobi FM's weekly broadcast schedule across a four-week reference period. The unit of analysis was the individual programme slot, defined as a scheduled broadcast unit with a distinct title, duration, genre classification, and language designation. A total of 157 programme entries were identified across the reference period and constituted with the full study dataset. Saturation sampling was employed; all coded entries from the reference period were included in the analysis to ensure that the findings reflected the complete structure of the station's programming output rather than a subset of it.

D. Coding Scheme and Variables

Three primary variables were operationalised for coding purposes. The first was language of broadcast, classified as Yoruba, English, or bilingual (Yoruba-English code-switching). The second was programme genre classified into six categories: current affairs and news, religious programming, agricultural programming, health education, sports commentary, and cultural and entertainment programming. The third was thematic focus, classified into four categories: language preservation, cultural heritage and values transmission, community development, and civic and political education. Each coding category was accompanied by explicit operational definitions and decision rules to minimise coder ambiguity.

Two trained coders independently coded all 157 entries. Cohen's kappa was computed for each variable to assess inter-coder reliability. Kappa values of 0.84 for language of broadcast, 0.82 for programme genre, and 0.81 for thematic focus were obtained, all exceeding the 0.80 threshold conventionally regarded as indicative of strong inter-coder agreement (Landis & Koch, 1977). Discrepancies between coders were resolved through structured discussion guided by the operational definitions.

E. Data Analysis

Coded data were entered into SPSS (Version 26) and analysed using descriptive statistics, specifically frequencies and percentages, calculated for each variable. Results are presented in tabular form to facilitate systematic reading of the distribution patterns. While the study does not employ inferential statistical techniques, given the absence of a comparison group or longitudinal design, the

descriptive findings are interpreted analytically in relation to the theoretical framework and the existing literature on indigenous-language broadcasting.

V. RESULTS

A. Language of Broadcast

Table 1 presents the distribution of programme entries by language of broadcast. The findings reveal a pronounced dominance of Yoruba-language content within Sobi FM's broadcast schedule. Of the 157 programme entries analysed, 143 (91.1%) were classified as Yoruba-language broadcasts. English-language programming accounted for 14 entries (8.9%). No programme entries were classified as primarily bilingual, though code-switching within individual broadcasts was noted and recorded as supplementary observational data.

Table 1: Distribution of Programme Entries by Language of Broadcast (N = 157)

Language of Broadcast	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Yoruba	143	91.1
English	14	8.9
Total	157	100.0

The degree of Yoruba-language dominance documented here is notable. At 91.1%, indigenous-language programming constitutes an overwhelming majority of the station's broadcast output, a figure that exceeds the proportions documented in comparable studies of Yoruba-language radio stations in southwestern Nigeria, where Yoruba-language content typically accounts for between 60% and 80% of programming (Rauf et al., 2023). This disparity may reflect Ilorin's particular sociolinguistic context, in which Yoruba identity and language carry heightened symbolic significance as markers of cultural distinctiveness within a historically contested political environment.

B. Programme Genre Distribution

Table 2 presents the distribution of programme entries by genre. Current affairs and news programming constituted the largest single genre category (n = 38; 24.2%), followed by cultural and entertainment programming (n = 31; 19.7%) and religious programming (n = 27; 17.2%). Agricultural programming accounted for 22 entries (14.0%), health education for 21 entries (13.4%), and sports commentary for 18 entries (11.5%).

Table 2: Distribution of Programme Entries by Programme Genre (N = 157)

Programme Genre	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Current Affairs / News	38	24.2
Religious Programming	27	17.2
Agricultural Programming	22	14.0
Health Education	21	13.4
Sports Commentary	18	11.5
Cultural / Entertainment	31	19.7
Total	157	100.0

The genre distribution is analytically significant for several reasons. The prominence of current affairs and news programming within the Yoruba-language schedule indicates that the station positions

Yoruba not merely as a language of entertainment or informal discourse, but as a competent medium for serious public affairs content, a positioning that has been identified in the literature as critical for elevating the perceived status of an indigenous language (Cormack, 2020). The substantial proportion of cultural and entertainment programming (19.7%) suggests deliberate investment in content that draws on and amplifies Yoruba cultural heritage, including music, folklore, oral traditions, and performative genres. Agricultural and health programming, together accounting for 27.4% of the schedule, reflects the station's orientation toward the practical information needs of its predominantly rural and peri-urban audience, content categories in which indigenous-language delivery has been shown to significantly improve comprehension and uptake (Oyero & Oyesomi, 2020).

C. Thematic Focus Distribution

Table 3 presents the distribution of programme entries by dominant thematic focus. Language preservation constituted the most frequently coded thematic orientation, accounting for 52 entries (33.1%), followed by cultural heritage and values transmission (n = 47; 29.9%), community development (n = 33; 21.0%), and civic and political education (n = 25; 15.9%).

Table 3: Distribution of Programme Entries by Thematic Focus (N = 157)

Thematic Focus	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Language Preservation	52	33.1
Cultural Heritage / Values	47	29.9
Community Development	33	21.0
Civic / Political Education	25	15.9
Total	157	100.0

The thematic data are, in some respects, the most analytically revealing findings in this study. The combined proportion of programme entries oriented toward language preservation and cultural heritage transmission (63.0%) indicates that Sobi FM's programming is not merely conducted in Yoruba; it is, to a significant degree, substantively about Yoruba, about the language itself, its value, its proper use, its cultural dimensions, and its transmission to younger generations. This is precisely the distinction that Rauf et al. (2023) draw between instrumental and cultural indigenous-language broadcasting: Sobi FM's schedule, on the evidence of this analysis, leans heavily toward the latter category.

VI. Discussion

The findings of this study converge on a picture of Sobi FM 101.9 as a broadcaster that has oriented its editorial practice comprehensively toward Yoruba-language content and culturally grounded programming. This is not, as the literature review established, an automatic or inevitable feature of community radio in postcolonial settings; it represents a series of deliberate choices, about language policy, genre investment, and thematic focus, that have meaningful consequences for the communities the station serves.

From the perspective of Cultural Transmission Theory, the implications are relatively clear. A station that devotes 91.1% of its schedule to Yoruba-language content, and that directs 63% of that content toward themes explicitly connected to language preservation and cultural heritage, functions as a robust institutional channel of oblique cultural transmission. It communicates to listeners of all ages that Yoruba is a viable, relevant, and prestigious medium for the full range of public discourse. It provides younger listeners with regular, accessible models of high-quality Yoruba language use. And it sustains, in the public sphere, a representation of Yoruba cultural life that extends well beyond the

domestic and informal domains in which indigenous languages typically retreat as they come under pressure from dominant languages (Kashima, 2022; Tomasello, 2019).

The genre distribution data add an important layer to this picture. The prominence of current affairs and news programming within the Yoruba-language schedule is particularly significant. In many postcolonial broadcasting contexts, indigenous languages are associated primarily with entertainment, informal talk, and religious content, genres that, while valuable, do not carry the same prestige as news and current affairs. A station that conducts its news broadcasting substantially in Yoruba makes an implicit claim about the language's adequacy for the most serious domains of public life. This claim has sociolinguistic consequences: as Cormack (2020) and Jones and Uribe-Jongbloed (2022) document in Welsh-language and Basque-language broadcasting contexts, the presence of indigenous-language news programming is one of the strongest predictors of listener perceptions of language vitality and prestige.

The agricultural and health education programming documented in this study carries a different but equally important set of implications. In Nigeria's rural communities, the practical value of information delivered in an accessible language cannot be overstated. Oyeró and Oyesomi (2020) demonstrate that health information delivered in indigenous languages achieves significantly higher rates of comprehension and behavioural uptake among rural audiences than equivalent content delivered in English, a finding with direct implications for public health intervention design. Sobi FM's investment in agricultural and health content in Yoruba thus represents not merely a cultural gesture but a public service contribution with documentable social consequences.

It is important to acknowledge, however, what this study cannot establish. Content analysis of a broadcast schedule provides evidence about what a station intends to air, and, to the extent that programme schedule data accurately reflects actual broadcast output, what it does air. It does not provide direct evidence about how listeners engage with this content, whether the cultural transmission processes theorised in the framework occur, or what the longitudinal effects of sustained indigenous-language broadcasting are on language attitudes and use within the community. These are legitimate and important empirical questions that this study's design is not positioned to answer. The findings presented here establish a necessary baseline, a clear account of what Sobi FM does, that future audience-oriented and longitudinal studies can build upon.

The findings also raise a broader question about sustainability. Indigenous-language broadcasting at the level of commitment demonstrated by Sobi FM is not cost-free. It requires investment in staff who are genuinely proficient in the language, in programme development that goes beyond simply switching the language of delivery to include substantively cultural content, and in the cultivation of audience relationships that sustain listener loyalty over time. In the absence of supportive regulatory frameworks and funding mechanisms, commercial pressures may erode this commitment over time, as stations find it more economical to rely on syndicated English-language content. The policy implications of this observation are taken up in the following section.

VII. Conclusion

This study set out to assess the contribution of Sobi FM 101.9 Ilorin to the promotion of Yoruba language and culture through indigenous-language programming. The evidence assembled through content analysis of 157 coded programme entries supports a clear conclusion: Sobi FM is doing something that matters, and it is doing it with a degree of commitment that is empirically demonstrable and theoretically significant.

Yoruba-language content accounts for 91.1% of the station's broadcast output. The station's genre portfolio spans the full range of public affairs relevant to its community, from news and current affairs through to health, agriculture, sport, and cultural entertainment. And more than six in ten programme entries are thematically oriented toward the explicit goals of language preservation and cultural heritage transmission. These are not the hallmarks of a station that uses Yoruba instrumentally as a market differentiation strategy. They are the hallmarks of a station that has made a genuine institutional commitment to the reproduction of Yoruba cultural life.

At the same time, the study identifies real limitations and unanswered questions. The absence of audience data means that the full loop of cultural transmission, from broadcast output to listener reception to community-level effects, remains empirically open. Future research should prioritise audience studies that examine how different demographic groups within Sobi FM's listenership engage with its indigenous-language content, what effects this engagement has on language attitudes and use, and how the station's programming contributes to or complicates the broader sociolinguistic dynamics of Ilorin and Kwara State. Qualitative and ethnographic methods, including broadcaster interviews and listener focus groups, would add interpretive depth that content analysis alone cannot provide.

The policy implications of this study extend beyond Sobi FM and beyond Kwara State. In a media environment characterised by increasing platform concentration, algorithmic content curation, and commercial pressure toward the most widely shared content, community radio stations that sustain indigenous-language programming represent a public good whose value exceeds its market signal. The National Broadcasting Commission of Nigeria and other regulatory bodies would do well to consider how licensing requirements, spectrum allocation policies, and content quotas might be designed to incentivise and sustain the kind of cultural commitment documented at Sobi FM, rather than leaving it to the goodwill and conviction of individual station owners and programme directors. A language, once lost to the airwaves, does not easily return.

VIII. Practical Implications And Recommendations

The evidence from this study generates recommendations at three levels: for broadcasting practitioners, for regulatory bodies, and for the academic research community.

For broadcasting practitioners, the Sobi FM model demonstrates that comprehensive indigenous-language programming is operationally feasible within a commercially operating radio station. Programme directors at comparable stations should consider the full genre range of Yoruba-language content documented at Sobi FM, particularly the investment in news and current affairs in Yoruba, which serves both a cultural and a public service function. Investment in staff who possess both indigenous-language proficiency and professional broadcast training should be treated as a strategic priority rather than an optional enhancement.

For regulatory and policy bodies, the findings support the case for mandatory indigenous-language content quotas as part of broadcasting licence conditions, a regulatory instrument already employed in several comparable jurisdictions, including South Africa and Ghana. More ambitiously, the evidence supports consideration of dedicated funding mechanisms, through a broadcasting development fund or through levies on digital platform operators, to support community radio stations that demonstrate sustained commitment to indigenous-language programming and cultural heritage content.

For the academic research community, this study highlights the need for methodological diversification in indigenous-language broadcasting research. Content analysis provides indispensable baseline evidence about programme structure and language distribution. But understanding the effects of that programming requires complementary methods: longitudinal audience surveys, experimental designs that assess comprehension and attitude change, and ethnographic studies of how broadcasting practices are embedded in and responded to by the communities they serve. The research agenda outlined here is substantial, and it is urgent.

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