

EVALUATION OF THE ROLE OF RADIO IN PROMOTING YORUBA LANGUAGE BY ADABA FM AMONG TRADERS IN OJA-OBA MARKET, AKURE

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Abstract

This paper aimed at investigating the role of indigenous language in radio listenership patterns, level of awareness of indigenous language use, listenership patterns and factors influencing indigenous languages programmes on Adaba FM among Oja Oba traders in Akure. The study employed a qualitative method using indepth interview, a purposive sampling of twenty (20) respondent was selected for the study through the use of a semi structure interview. Findings of the study revealed a high level of awareness and listenership to indigenous programs on Adaba FM, and Yoruba indigenous programmes contributes to a sense of identity and cultural continuity. Amongst others, it affirms that indigenous programs have tangible benefits for business practices, and further emphasis the broader implications of language choice in media for cultural preservation, identity formation, and sustainable community development. Based on the findings of the study, this study concludes that indigenous language programming shape radio listenership patterns, fostering cultural identity, and promoting community engagement. The authors recommend that Adaba FM should continue to prioritise the use of the Yoruba language in its broadcasts in other to maximise reach and listener satisfaction, Adaba FM should increase its involvement in community activities, such as organising local events and live broadcasts at market canters and that a robust feedback system to capture listeners' opinion on various programmes should be implemented.

Keywords: Adaba FM, Akure Oja-Oba, indigenous language, Radio, Listenership, Traders,

Introduction

Communication is the process of transmitting information, ideas, thoughts, or feelings between individuals or groups through various channels and mediums. In achieving effective communication, indigenous language plays a pivotal role in enhancing understanding and clarity. People tend to understand information better when it is delivered in their native language, which reduces misunderstandings and ensures that the intended message is conveyed accurately (Egbas, 2022). Using indigenous languages in communication can build trust and credibility, as people are more likely to trust information delivered in their own language, seeing it as more authentic and reliable. Inclusivity is perceived when communicating in indigenous languages, ensuring that all community members, including those who may not be fluent in

dominant or colonial languages, are included and can participate fully in the communication process (Adegbite, 2017). Communication in indigenous languages can be more persuasive, as it aligns with the audience's linguistic and cultural identity, making it more likely to influence attitudes and behaviours. Using indigenous languages in media and communication helps preserve and revitalise these languages, contributing to the protection of cultural heritage and identity. Using indigenous languages can make radio programs more engaging, relatable, and effective in reaching and influencing the target audience (Akindele & Adegbite, 1999).

The indigenous language are languages that are native to a particular region or community, often passed down from one generation to another which are deeply rooted in cultural heritage (Grenoble & Whaley, 2006). These languages serve as vehicles for preserving cultural heritage, transmitting traditional knowledge, and fostering social cohesion among traders within the marketplace (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). The importance of indigenous languages in communication cannot be overstated. Language serves as a vehicle for expressing culture, identity, and community belonging. In the context of radio, the choice of language can significantly impact listenership, as it influences comprehension, engagement, and emotional resonance (Mlambo, 2018).

According to historical records (Akande, 2019), radio broadcasting has evolved over time, with an increasing emphasis on incorporating indigenous languages to cater to diverse linguistic preferences. Radio continues to be a vital medium for disseminating information, entertainment, and culture, especially in regions where access to other forms of media is restricted (Oyedele & Okorie, 2018). Its affordability, portability, and accessibility make it a preferred choice for communication, particularly among rural populations and marginalised groups (Onwumehili, 2017). In many African countries, radio remains the primary source of news and entertainment for millions of people, playing a crucial role in shaping public opinion and social discourse (Kabanda, 2019). Meanwhile, radio serves as a lifeline of connectivity, by providing traders with vital market information, news updates, and entertainment during their daily activities. However, the language used in radio broadcasts plays a crucial role in determining listenership patterns, as it influences comprehension, engagement, and cultural resonance among the traders. Traders form a dynamic community characterized by diverse backgrounds, occupations, and linguistic affiliations. Within the marketplace, radio listenership patterns are intricately linked to traders' information needs, market behaviours, and socio-cultural interactions. As those traders play a significant role in economics. Radio serves as a primary source of information and entertainment for traders, with many tuning in to programmes broadcast in their native language. A survey conducted by Ojo and Afolabi (2018) found that over 80% of Akure traders listen to radio programs primarily in Yoruba, as it allows them to get vital information, market trend that they can easily resonate with. By examining the interplay between language, radio usage, and traders' socio-economic activities, this research project aims to unravel the nuances of media consumption patterns and cultural identity within the Akure Oja Oba marketplace.

Statement of the Problem

Indigenous languages play a crucial role in ensuring the inclusivity and accessibility of radio broadcasts. Nigeria is home to over 500 languages, with Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo being the most widely spoken. Radio stations that broadcast in these languages can reach a broader audience by overcoming the language barrier that often limits the accessibility of information provided in English or other non-native languages (Adeleke, 2018). Despite the prevalence of radio as a mass communication medium, there exists

a gap in understanding how indigenous language influences radio listenership patterns among traders (Uloaku, 2022). While indigenous languages are widely spoken within the marketplace, it is unclear to what extent traders engage with radio programming in their native languages. Previous researchers had covered impact cultural relevance of radio listenership traders; economic impact, of indigenous language broadcast on traders in rural Nigeria; role of indigenous radio in facilitating trade, and how indigenous language broadcasting enhance cultural relevance. (Oso, 2022; Omole, 2021; Oribhabor, 2020, Adebija, 2020). However, in spite of the fact that the Yoruba indigenous is widely spoken in the market place, there is a dearth of literature as to the role of this indigenous language among Akure Oja Oba traders, which is the gap that the study seeks to fill

Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this research is to investigate the role of indigenous language in shaping radio listenership patterns among Akure Oja Oba traders. Specifically, the study aims to,

1. Examine the respondent`s level of awareness of indigenous language usage on *Adaba* FM among Oja Oba traders
2. Determine the listenership pattern of Oja Oba traders to *Adaba* FM indigenous programme
3. Identify the factors influencing listenership to indigenous language programme on *Adaba* FM among Akure Oja Oba traders

Research Questions

1. What is the level of awareness of Yoruba language programme broadcast on *Adaba* FM among traders in Akure Oja Oba?
2. What are the key factor that influence traders` decisions to listen to *Adaba* FM?
3. What are the factors influencing listenership to indigenous language programme on *Adaba* FM among Akure Oja Oba traders?

Literature Review

Concept of Indigenous Language

Indigenous languages are integral to the cultural fabric and identity of its diverse ethnic groups, encompassing a rich linguistic heritage that reflects centuries of history, tradition, and social organization (Adegbija, 2004). These languages play a pivotal role in communication, cultural expression, and the preservation of traditional knowledge among indigenous communities across the country. Nigeria is home to over 500 languages, making it one of the most linguistically diverse countries in the world (Eberhard et al., 2022). These languages exhibit diverse grammatical structures, vocabularies, and phonetic features that reflect the cultural diversity and ecological contexts of various ethnic groups. In the South-Western Nigeria, indigenous languages reflect centuries of history, tradition, and social organisation among the Yoruba-speaking population and other ethnic groups residing in the area (Adegbija, 2004). They play a crucial role in communication, cultural expression, and the preservation of traditional knowledge within the community. The preservation of indigenous languages is closely tied to maintaining cultural identity and heritage. These languages encode not only linguistic patterns but also values, customs, and historical narratives that shape the worldview and social practices of the Yoruba people and other ethnic groups in the area (Bamgbose, 2006). For instance, the Yoruba language facilitates communication and embodies cultural concepts related to kinship, spirituality, and governance, which are central to the Yoruba way of life.

Despite their cultural significance, indigenous languages face several threats to their survival. Historical factors, such as colonization and the subsequent adoption of English as the official language, have marginalized indigenous languages, leading to language shift and endangerment (Bamgbose, 2006). Globalisation, urbanization, and socioeconomic changes further challenge efforts to maintain and promote these languages within the community. Younger generations are increasingly adopting English and Pidgin English for daily communication, often at the expense of their native languages. Efforts to revitalise indigenous languages encompass various strategies, including community-based initiatives, advocacy for language rights, and integrating indigenous languages into formal education systems (Adedimeji, 2010). Local organisations and cultural groups advocate for bilingual education programs that promote proficiency in both Yoruba and English, aiming to preserve linguistic diversity while equipping youth with necessary skills for modern contexts. Cultural festivals, traditional storytelling, and the use of media in indigenous languages are also employed to encourage language use and transmission. Successful examples of indigenous language revitalisation can be found local radio stations, such as *Adaba FM*, broadcast programmes in Yoruba, promoting the use of the language in everyday communication and preserving cultural heritage (Salawu, 2006). Additionally, digital platforms and social media provide new opportunities for language revitalisation, enabling the Yoruba-speaking community to connect, share resources, and promote their language globally. Educational institutions in Akure are also incorporating Yoruba into their curricula, fostering an environment where the language can thrive.

Concept of Radio Listenership

Radio listenership in Nigeria involves individuals or communities tuning in to radio broadcasts for information, entertainment, education, or cultural engagement. This aspect of media consumption is fundamental in shaping audience behaviours, preferences, and societal interactions (Webster & Phalen, 1997). In Nigeria, where access to television and the internet can be limited, radio remains a vital medium for reaching diverse audiences across urban and rural areas. Several factors contribute to radio listenership patterns in Nigeria, including demographic characteristics, content relevance, technological accessibility, and cultural preferences (Webster & Phalen, 1997). As a medium of communication, radio provides information, entertainment, education, and cultural engagement to a diverse audience. In a region where access to television and internet services can be limited, radio remains a vital and accessible source of media (Ojebode, 2013). Language plays a significant role, with broadcasts in indigenous languages helping to cater to diverse linguistic groups across the country (Salawu, 2006).

In Nigeria, audience engagement in radio listenership involves active participation through listening, call-ins, social media interactions, and feedback mechanisms. The dynamic relationship between broadcasters and listeners is influenced by the quality of programming, the personality of radio hosts, and the perceived relevance of content (Ward & Mazzarella, 2004). Nigerian radio stations often feature interactive programs where listeners can express their views, participate in discussions, and engage with content in real-time (Nwabueze & Ezegwu, 2012). The success of radio listenership depends on the quality and diversity of programming offered to audiences. Programmes that address local interests, cultural norms, and language preferences tend to attract higher listenership and loyalty (Berg, 2008). Community radio stations such as *Adaba FM*, cater to specific demographic groups and cultural preferences, promoting a sense of community and inclusivity (Salawu, 2006). These

stations provide content tailored to the specific needs and preferences of their audiences, promoting cultural heritage and social cohesion.

Technological advancements, such as digital radio broadcasting and online streaming platforms, have expanded access to radio content in Nigeria beyond traditional broadcast boundaries (Rennie, 2014). These innovations enable listeners to engage with radio programmes anytime, anywhere, using mobile devices and Internet connectivity. The proliferation of mobile phones has particularly transformed radio consumption patterns, allowing for greater flexibility and access to a wider range of content (Ojebode, 2013). Radio plays a pivotal role in shaping cultural norms, public opinion, and social discourse within communities. It serves as a platform for cultural expression, language preservation, and political mobilisation, especially in regions where access to other forms of media may be restricted or controlled (Ward & Mazzarella, 2004). Indigenous radio stations often promote linguistic diversity and cultural heritage, fostering community solidarity and empowerment (UNESCO, 2020). These stations address local issues, educate the public, and provide a voice for marginalized groups.

Review of Related Literature

Indigenous languages hold a profound significance in the cultural, social, and economic lives of people. The role of indigenous languages in media, particularly radio, is crucial. The evolution of radio in Nigeria has seen a significant shift from colonial-era broadcasts in English to a more inclusive approach that incorporates indigenous languages. Initially, radio was used primarily for government propaganda and colonial administration (Ekpo, 2016). Post-independence, there was a growing recognition of the need to communicate with the diverse linguistic groups in the country. This shift led to the inclusion of indigenous languages in radio programming to foster national unity and ensure broad accessibility (Adeleke, 2018). One of the primary benefits of using indigenous languages in radio broadcasting is the enhancement of accessibility and comprehension. Many traders, particularly in rural areas, have limited proficiency in English or other major languages. Indigenous language broadcasting ensures that these traders can access vital information without language barriers (Bello & Oyero, 2020). Information presented in a listener's native language is more likely to be understood and retained, which is crucial for traders who rely on timely and accurate information to make business decisions (Adebayo, 2019).

A study by Ojebode (2020) found that radio stations broadcasting in indigenous languages had higher listenership among local traders compared to those broadcasting in English or Pidgin. This increased accessibility translates to better-informed traders who can navigate market dynamics more effectively. Trust and credibility are essential for effective communication, especially in trade where misinformation can have significant economic consequences. Indigenous languages foster a sense of community and belonging, which enhances the perceived reliability of the information being broadcasted (Omenugha et al., 2018). Traders are more likely to trust and act upon information delivered in their native language by familiar voices. Garba (2018) found that Hausa-speaking traders in Northern Nigeria preferred Hausa-language broadcasts for market updates and business news. The familiarity and cultural resonance of the language contributed to higher trust levels and greater reliance on the information provided. Indigenous language broadcasting enhances cultural relevance and engagement. Radio programmes that incorporate local idioms, proverbs, and cultural references are more relatable and engaging for listeners. This cultural resonance can increase listenership among traders who feel that the content is tailored to their specific

context and experiences (Oso, 2022). In South-Western Nigeria, Yoruba-language radio stations such as *Splash FM* and *Radio Lagos* have successfully engaged local traders by addressing local business practices and market trends in a culturally relevant manner (Adegbija, 2020). These stations not only provide business information but also celebrate regional festivals and discuss community issues, making them an integral part of the listeners' daily lives.

A study by Egbas (2022) found that farmers and traders who listened to indigenous language broadcasts were more likely to report higher incomes and better business outcomes compared to those who did not. This correlation underscores the importance of accessible and trusted information in supporting economic activities. The use of indigenous languages in radio broadcasting has significant economic implications. By providing accessible and trusted information, indigenous language radio supports local economies. Traders rely on market updates, price information, and business news to make informed decisions, which can enhance their economic outcomes (Omole, 2021). For instance, community radio stations in Nigeria often broadcast programmes that focus on local trade and commerce. These programs provide a platform for businesses to advertise their products and services, and for listeners to call in to buy or sell goods. This facilitates trade within the community and supports local businesses (Oribhabor, 2020).

While the benefits of indigenous language broadcasting are clear, there are also challenges to consider. One major challenge is the cost of producing content in multiple languages. Radio stations need to invest in talent and resources to produce high-quality programmes in various indigenous languages, which can be a significant financial burden (Amadi, 2018). Another challenge is the potential for audience fragmentation. Broadcasting in multiple languages can lead to fragmented audiences, making it harder to achieve broad reach. Stations must balance the need for linguistic inclusivity with the goal of reaching a diverse audience (Babalola, 2019).

Despite these challenges, there are significant opportunities for enhancing the impact of indigenous language broadcasting. Digital technology offers a promising avenue for expanding reach. Online radio and mobile apps can make indigenous language content accessible to a broader audience, including those outside the immediate broadcast area (Eze, 2021). Collaboration between radio stations and local businesses can also be beneficial. By partnering with local traders and market associations, stations can create content that is directly relevant to their audience, enhancing engagement and listenership (Ajayi, 2020).

Review of Empirical Studies

Oso (2022) examined the impact of cultural relevance on radio listenership among traders in Nigeria. The study involved interviews with 300 traders in Lagos and Ibadan. The findings revealed that 68% of the respondents preferred indigenous language broadcasts due to their cultural relevance. The study emphasised that radio programmes that incorporated local cultural elements were more likely to attract and retain listeners. Another study by Omole (2021) investigated the economic impact of indigenous language radio broadcasts on traders in rural Nigeria. The study involved a survey of 250 traders in Ekiti and Ondo states. The results showed that traders who regularly listened to indigenous language broadcasts reported better business outcomes. Specifically, 68% of the respondents indicated that they were able to make more informed business decisions based on the information provided in the broadcasts. The study concluded that indigenous language broadcasts played a crucial role in supporting local economies by providing traders with accurate and timely market information.

Oribhabor (2020) conducted a study on the role of indigenous language radio in facilitating trade in Nigeria. The study surveyed 300 traders in Anambra and Enugu states. The findings revealed that 72% of the respondents found indigenous language broadcasts to be an essential source of market information. The study noted that the use of indigenous languages in radio broadcasts helped traders navigate market dynamics more effectively, leading to better economic outcomes.

Garba (2018) focused on the Hausa-speaking regions of Northern Nigeria. The study surveyed 300 traders in Kano and Kaduna, examining their radio listenership habits. The findings revealed that 82% of the respondents preferred Hausa-language broadcasts over English or other languages. The study highlighted that the use of Hausa in radio broadcasts increased the comprehensibility of the information, which in turn enhanced the traders' ability to make informed business decisions. The study also noted that Hausa-language radio programs had higher listener engagement, with interactive segments allowing traders to call in and discuss market trends. Omenugha, *et al.* (2018) conducted a study examining how indigenous languages affect the perceived trustworthiness of radio broadcasts. The study surveyed 400 traders in Eastern Nigeria, focusing on Igbo-language radio stations. The results indicated that 78% of the respondents trusted Igbo-language broadcasts more than those in English. The study found that the use of indigenous languages fostered a sense of community and belonging, which enhanced the credibility of the information provided.

Theoretical Review

Uses and Gratification Theory

As noted by Baran and Davis (2011), the theory is attributed to researchers Jay G. Blumler and Elihu Katz who in 1974 published their seminal research paper titled “The uses of mass communication: Current perspectives on gratifications research”, which highlighted a whole depiction of the Uses and Gratifications Theory. The Uses and Gratifications Theory is a Mass Communication theory that focuses on the needs, motives and gratifications of media users. The theory states that media consumers are not passive consumers of mass communications; rather, they play an active role in media consumption (Gordon, 2024). As explained by Kasirye (2022), the uses and gratifications theory deals with understanding why people use certain types of media, what needs do they have to use them, and what gratifications do they get from using them. However, the theory identifies that people have great power over their choice on what they want in a media over the media's influence on them. As posited by Vinney (2024), the theory proposes that people choose to consume certain kinds of media because they expect to obtain specific satisfactions as a result of those selections. Unlike other mass media theories, the uses and gratification theory focuses on the media consumer rather than the media itself or the messages the media conveys. While other theories see people as passive recipients of media messages, UGT sees people as active consumers of media who are aware of the reasons, they choose to consume media. Likewise, audiences are aware of the reasons they want to consume media and consciously use those reasons to make media selections that will fulfill their needs and desires. In this study, the authors attempted to examine the implication of this theory in the Yoruba programme aired on *Adaba* FM.

Research Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative research design for this study. And semi structured interview guide to gather detailed narrative and personal experience of traders regarding indigenous language and listenership patterns. The population of this study comprised

of residents in Akure, Ondo State. Akure population was stated to 773,000, with 3.9% increase from 2023 estimated to be 744,000 according to the metro area population 1950-2022 (Metro Area Population, 2024). In the course of this study, the population of the study comprised of all traders in Akure's Oja Oba market. A convenience sampling was adopted to select a diverse group of traders. A sample size of 20 respondent was purposively selected from the subset of the population for interviews. Semi-structured interview guide was used to elicit qualitative data from traders on their experiences and perceptions regarding the usage of indigenous language for radio transmission. Data collected from the study was analysed using thematic analysis. This process involves coding the data to identify key themes and patterns related to the traders' radio listenership behaviours and language preferences.

Data Presentation

To structure the analysis, themes were categorised according to the research objectives while remaining open to new ideas that emerged. This method was akin to building a pyramid, with broader themes supported by specific details below. The researcher revisited the data to validate each theme with direct evidence from the transcripts (Creswell, 2014). The final step involved summarising the findings and focusing on the most prominent themes. Rather than merely describing the information, the researcher used the themes to draw conclusions and explain the role of indigenous language in shaping radio listenership patterns among Oja-Oba traders.

Objective 1: *Level of Awareness of Indigenous Language Usage on Adaba FM Among Oja Oba Traders*

General Awareness

General awareness of Adaba FM's Yoruba language programming was notably high among the respondents. Many participants reported being well-informed about the station's use of the indigenous language for various broadcasts, ranging from news and current affairs to entertainment and educational content. The recognition of the station as a platform that champions the use of Yoruba contributed to its popularity. Respondents like Participant 1 noted, *"I've been listening to Adaba FM for years, and they've always prioritised our language. I know many people who tune in just because it's in Yoruba."* This widespread awareness aligns with the findings of Obanya (2018), who emphasised that awareness of indigenous language media among communities is often driven by cultural identification and loyalty to the language. The high level of awareness is also attributed to the station's consistent use of the language over the years. Many respondents highlighted that this consistency has made Adaba FM synonymous with indigenous language programming. This indicates that a long-standing use of the language in broadcasts can lead to greater familiarity and, consequently, more listenership.

Exposure through Community Networks

Findings from the study showed that the role of community networks fosters awareness of Adaba FM, many respondents indicated that they became aware of Adaba FM's Yoruba programmes through word-of-mouth communication within their social circles. For instance, Participant 3 shared, *"I first learned about Adaba FM from my market friends. We would discuss the programmes during breaks, and that's how I started listening."* This form of indirect exposure is crucial in understanding the spread of

awareness within close-knit communities. Community networks play a significant role in promoting indigenous language media, as they rely on interpersonal relationships and trust. Some scholars believe such networks are particularly effective in rural and semi-urban areas where media channels are limited (Schramm, 2009). The reliance on these informal networks shows that the station benefits from being part of the community's daily discourse, which, in turn, fosters deeper engagement and loyalty.

Impact of Language on Awareness

It was evident that the choice of language has a direct impact on awareness levels, as demonstrated by the respondents' reflections. Many traders reported that they were drawn to the station specifically because of its use of the Yoruba language. Participant 6 expressed, "*Hearing Yoruba on the radio made me feel like the station was speaking directly to me. It's something I don't get from other stations.*" This indicates that language can be a significant influence in media consumption, making it easier for certain groups to identify with the content. The influence of language on awareness is also evident in the perception of accessibility. Respondents noted that they found *Adaba FM's* programmes easier to understand and engage with because they were in their native language. This accessibility fosters greater awareness and creates a feedback loop where listeners are more likely to recommend the station to others within their linguistic group, thereby amplifying its reach and influence.

Objective 2: *Determining the Listenership Patterns of Oja-Oba Traders to Adaba FM's Indigenous Programs*

Listening Times

The study revealed that listening times were closely tied to the traders' work schedules. Many respondents reported listening to *Adaba FM's* Yoruba programmes in the early morning or late evening, as these were the periods when they were less busy. Participant 14 shared, "*I listen to the programmes while setting up my stall in the morning. It's a good way to start the day before the customers come.*" This pattern is consistent with Warren et al. (2014), who found that radio listenership often peaks during transitional periods of the day. Meanwhile, participant 20 shared that, "*I listen to radio programs on my way to the market, most of the time and it usually inside commercial bus with other passenger*"

The preference for specific listening times indicates that the station's scheduling strategy needs to consider the daily rhythms of its audience. For traders who spend most of their day at the market, programs aired during peak business hours may not reach the intended audience, thus limiting engagement.

Individual vs. Collective Listening

Many respondents reported listening to *Adaba FM* in groups, either with fellow traders at the market or with family members at home. This collective listening practice turned radio consumption into a social activity, facilitating discussions and shared experiences. Participant 6 mentioned, "*We listen together in the market, and sometimes we even call in to share our views on the programs.*" Collective listening enhances engagement, as it provides opportunities for communal discourse and feedback on the content being aired. This finding supports Bailey, et al. (2010), who argued that radio serves as a communal tool that fosters social interaction and shared experiences. For Oja-Oba

traders, listening to Adaba FM's Yoruba programs collectively not only enhances their understanding of the content but also strengthens social bonds within the community.

Adaptations to the Market Environment

Given the busy and often noisy environment of the market, some respondents adapted their listening habits to ensure they could follow the programmes without interruption. Several traders reported using earphones or portable radios to minimise distractions. Participant 13 noted, *"I have a small radio that I carry around with earphones so I can listen even when the market is noisy."* This adaptability reflects a strong commitment to staying informed and engaged with the programs despite the challenging environment. The use of earphones and portable radios demonstrates the traders' desire to integrate radio listening into their daily activities. This adaptability is indicative of the importance they place on the information and entertainment provided by Adaba FM, even if it requires extra effort to access it amidst the hustle and bustle of the market.

Influence on Business Practices

Several traders noted that the programmes had influenced their business practices. Practical information, such as pricing strategies and customer service tips shared in the Yoruba programs, was often applied in their daily operations. Participant 10 stated, *"I've started using some of the business tips they talked about, and it's helped me attract more customers"*. This demonstrates that indigenous language programs can have tangible economic benefits for listeners. The influence of Adaba FM on business practices highlights the potential for indigenous language media to serve as a tool for economic empowerment. By providing relevant and practical information in a language that is easily understood, the station can help listeners make informed decisions that positively impact their livelihoods.

Objective 3: Identifying Factors Influencing Listenership to Indigenous Language Programs on Adaba FM

Language Preference

Language preference is a significant determinant of listenership to Adaba FM's indigenous language programs. Most respondents indicated a strong preference for media in their native language, as it facilitates better understanding and emotional connection. Participant 7 stated, *"I find it easier to understand the news and discussions when it's in Yoruba. It feels more relatable."* This preference for indigenous language programming is consistent with the findings of Omoniyi (2018), who noted that language plays a central role in audience engagement, especially in regions where indigenous languages are widely spoken.

Moreover, the use of Yoruba was seen as a form of cultural preservation. Participants expressed that listening to Yoruba programs on Adaba FM helped them stay connected to their roots and traditions. This sentiment reflects the broader cultural significance of language in media, as it serves not just as a communication tool but also as a symbol of identity and heritage.

Content Relevance

The relevance of the content to the daily lives and business activities of the traders emerged as a critical factor influencing listenership. Participants appreciated that the programs focused on topics directly affecting their livelihoods, such as market trends,

agricultural updates, and local policies. Participant 5 commented, *“The programmes talk about things that matter to us. They discuss what’s happening in the market and how to manage our businesses. That’s why I listen.”* Respondent 18 also indicate that *“Yoruba programs aired help them break the barriers of literacy, as it gives me the benefit to comprehend matters of discussion in my native language.”* Content relevance is a key factor in media engagement, as highlighted by McQuail (2010), who argued that audiences are more likely to engage with content that resonates with their personal experiences. For Oja-Oba traders, Adaba FM’s focus on local issues and practical information makes the programs valuable, encouraging regular listenership.

Perceived Credibility of Information

The use of Yoruba also enhanced the credibility of Adaba FM among listeners. Respondents indicated that they trusted the station more because it used their language, making the information seem more authentic and reliable. Participant 4 noted, *“When they speak in Yoruba, it feels more genuine. It makes me trust them more.”* This aligns with some scholars’ position, who argued that language choice in media affects perceived authenticity and trustworthiness (Fairclough, 2003). The credibility associated with indigenous language programming can have significant implications for the station’s influence within the community. When listeners perceive the information as credible, they are more likely to act on it, whether it pertains to business practices, health advice, or political issues.

Cultural Affinity

Cultural affinity also emerged as a significant factor influencing listenership. Many respondents described a sense of pride and cultural validation when they heard Yoruba on a mainstream radio station. Participant 8 stated, *“Listening to Yoruba on the radio is like hearing our culture being celebrated. It makes me feel proud.”* This cultural connection strengthens the bond between the station and its listeners, fostering loyalty and a sense of community. This finding supports the arguments that media reflecting local culture and language fosters greater community engagement and loyalty (Schudson, 2003). For the traders, Adaba FM’s use of Yoruba is not just about language preference but also about cultural representation and respect for their heritage.

Cultural Identity

Based on the study findings, hearing native language on Adaba FM had a profound impact on the traders’ sense of cultural identity. Many participants reported that the station’s use of Yoruba made them feel recognized and respected. Participant 12 shared, *“When I hear Yoruba on the radio, I feel proud of my culture. It’s like they are giving us a voice.”* This sentiment aligns with Janus (2016), who found that media in indigenous languages reinforces cultural identity and communal bonds. The station’s use of Yoruba also contributed to a sense of cultural continuity, as respondents noted that it helped preserve their language and traditions. For many, listening to Yoruba programs was not just about staying informed but also about staying connected to their cultural roots.

Programme Scheduling

Program scheduling was identified as another important factor influencing listenership. Many respondents indicated that they preferred listening to Yoruba programs during specific times of the day, such as early morning or late evening, when market activities

were minimal. Participant 12 noted, “*I would like to listen more, but sometimes the programs are aired when I’m busy with customers. If they could change the time, it would be better.*”

The timing of broadcasts is a crucial aspect of media planning, as it determines when the target audience is most available to engage with the content (Weimann, 2000). For Oja-Oba traders, aligning the programs with their daily routines would likely increase listenership and satisfaction with the station.

Discussion of Findings

This study examined the influence of indigenous language programming on radio listenership patterns among Oja-Oba traders in Akure, with a specific focus on *Adaba* FM’s use of the Yoruba language. The findings revealed that the incorporation of Yoruba in radio broadcasts plays an important role in enhancing audience engagement, fostering cultural identity, and promoting community cohesion. The high level of awareness and listenership observed among the respondents can be attributed to the use of the Yoruba language, which made *Adaba* FM’s programs more relatable and accessible. Many respondents expressed that they felt a stronger connection to the station because it broadcasted in their native language. This finding aligns with Obanya (2018), who emphasised that indigenous language media often serves as a critical link between the community and the media platform, as it fosters a sense of cultural loyalty and pride. The respondents’ preference for programs in Yoruba underscores the importance of language as a medium that not only conveys information but also strengthens cultural ties and emotional engagement.

In addition, the use of the Yoruba language in *Adaba* FM’s programs contributed to a sense of identity and cultural continuity among listeners. Many respondents indicated that the station’s use of their native language made them feel recognized, respected, and connected to their roots. This sentiment resonates with the findings of Janus (2016), who argued that media that employs indigenous languages fosters cultural preservation and serves as a tool for reinforcing cultural identity. It was observed that the traders’ preference for *Adaba* FM’s indigenous language programming was not solely due to ease of comprehension but also because it provided a platform for celebrating and sustaining their cultural heritage.

Findings of the study illustrated that indigenous language programming has tangible benefits for business practices among the Oja-Oba traders. Many respondents reported applying business tips and strategies shared during the programs in their daily trading activities. This suggests that indigenous language media can serve as an effective tool for economic empowerment, providing listeners with relevant and actionable information that positively influences their livelihoods. This finding supports the arguments of McQuail (2010), who posited that media content in local languages can significantly influence audience behaviour when it addresses practical issues that resonate with their daily lives. By delivering content that is not only culturally relevant but also economically beneficial, *Adaba* FM effectively positions itself as a trusted source of information for its listeners.

Findings of the study also revealed that content relevance, language preference, and program scheduling emerged as key determinants of listenership patterns among the traders. Respondents valued programs that addressed topics pertinent to their lives, such as market trends, agricultural updates, and local policies. The findings echo the views of Omoniyi (2018), who stated that media content in indigenous languages is

more likely to attract and retain audiences because it resonates with their lived experiences. However, some respondents noted that Adaba FM's scheduling sometimes conflicted with their trading hours, limiting their ability to listen consistently. This highlights a crucial area for improvement, as suggested by Weimann (2000), who argued that the timing of broadcasts should align with the target audience's daily routines to maximise engagement. Aligning program schedules with the traders' peak availability times would likely increase listenership and satisfaction with the station.

The study's findings also highlighted the role of community networks in promoting indigenous language media. Many respondents noted that they first became aware of *Adaba* FM's Yoruba programs through word-of-mouth communication within their social circles. This finding supports Schramm's (2009) argument that community networks are particularly effective in rural and semi-urban areas, where informal communication channels are central to spreading information. The reliance on interpersonal relationships for information dissemination indicates that *Adaba* FM benefits from being part of the community's daily discourse, which, in turn, fosters deeper engagement and loyalty. The study underscores the significance of indigenous language programming in shaping radio listenership patterns, fostering cultural identity, and promoting community engagement. By leveraging the Yoruba language, *Adaba* FM not only enhances accessibility and comprehension but also reinforces the cultural and social ties within the community. The findings emphasise the broader implications of language choice in media for cultural preservation, identity formation, and sustainable community development, highlighting the potential for indigenous language programming to serve as a powerful tool for both cultural affirmation and sustainable media influence.

Conclusion

This study focused on examining the role of indigenous language usage on radio listenership patterns among Oja-Oba traders in Akure, with a specific emphasis on *Adaba* FM's Yoruba language programs. The research aimed to investigate the level of awareness of these programs, the listenership patterns of traders, and the key factors influencing their engagement with the indigenous language broadcasts. The study utilised in-depth interviews to collect qualitative data, providing a comprehensive view of how language choice and cultural relevance shape media consumption in this demographic. Findings indicated a high level of awareness of *Adaba* FM's Yoruba programs among the traders. Based on the research findings, the study concludes that significance of indigenous language programming shape radio listenership patterns, fostering cultural identity, and promoting community engagement. By leveraging the Yoruba language, *Adaba* FM not only enhances accessibility and comprehension but also reinforces the cultural and social ties within the community. The study emphasises the broader implications of language choice in media for cultural preservation and community cohesion, highlighting the potential for indigenous language programming to serve as a powerful tool for both cultural affirmation and sustainable media influence.

Recommendations

Based on the study's findings on the radio listenership patterns among market women in Akure and the role of indigenous language programming on *Adaba* FM, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. *Adaba* FM should continue to prioritize the use of the Yoruba language in its broadcasts. To maximise reach and listener satisfaction, the station should introduce

more Yoruba-based educational and entertainment programs. This will help solidify its cultural relevance and further engage its target audience.

2. Considering that a significant portion of listeners are traders, the station should develop more programs focused on business news, market updates, and economic analysis. Such content will offer valuable insights to the audience and provide information that directly impacts their business activities.
3. To maintain and grow its listener base, *Adaba* FM should increase its involvement in community activities, such as organising local events and live broadcasts at market centres. Collaborating with market associations and community leaders to promote radio programs would strengthen its relationship with listeners and increase program participation.

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