Evaluation of the Contribution of Indigenous Art Forms in Nigerian Broadcast Media on Climate Change Awareness and Mitigation Behaviour

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Abstract

Climate change poses significant challenges to environmental sustainability in Nigeria, threatening livelihoods and economic stability. While government and non-governmental organisations have initiated mitigation efforts, conventional strategies often fail to resonate culturally with grassroots communities. Anchored on Agenda-Setting Theory and Cultural Theory, the study evaluates the contribution of indigenous art forms utilised in the Nigerian broadcast media as tools for communicating climate change realities. A mixed-method approach combining content analysis and in-depth interview was adopted as research design to evaluate selected radio and television programmes from stations that incorporate indigenous artistic expressions related to environmental themes. A purposive sample of 20 programmes aired between 2020 and 2024 was analysed to identify patterns in message framing, symbolic representations, and calls to action. In-depth interviews with six broadcasters, climate advocates and cultural environmental communicators were also carried out to provide context, intent, design, and perceived impact of such content. Findings reveal that indigenous art forms adapted to modern broadcast formats not only simplify complex climate information but engage audiences emotionally and symbolically, fostering greater connection to environmental issues than conventional scientific messaging. The study also found that indigenous art forms bridge knowledge gaps, fosters environmental consciousness, and encourages sustainable livelihood practices. Furthermore, these artistic expressions often serve as communal archives of ecological wisdom, warning systems, and advocacy tools rooted in local cosmologies and sustainability ethics. The study concludes that integration of indigenous artistic expressions into climate communication efforts enhances awareness, education, local relevance, cultural ownership, behavioural change and participation in climate action.

Keywords: climate change communication, broadcast media, indigenous art forms, environmental awareness, mitigation behaviour

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Introduction

Climate change has emerged as one of the most pressing global challenges, with its impacts disproportionately felt across the world, especially in developing countries like Nigeria. Rising temperatures, desertification, flooding, unpredictable rainfall patterns, and biodiversity loss continue to threaten food security, human health, and livelihoods across Nigerian communities. Despite scientific evidence and international policy frameworks, effective climate action in Nigeria remains constrained by low public awareness, poor access to environmental information, and limited behavioural change at the grassroots level (Dahlstrom & Scheufele, 2018). As such, communication strategies capable of bridging the knowledge–action gap have become critical in promoting climate change awareness and mitigation. Consequently, most policy efforts to communicate climate change have sought to bring about cognitive engagement with the public through the provision of scientific information and rational arguments (Burke et al., 2018).

Inability of conventional science communication to fully address how people perceive and react to climate change information has often resulted in misconceptions and trivializations of the issue. In the broadest sense, the delivery of abstract science-based information not only fails to inspire people, it also lacks the dimension of storytelling required to make information both accessible and engaging (Roosen et al., 2018). The presentation of climate discourse in technical or detached terms, risks alienating audiences who require messages that connect with their everyday realities. In this regard, the Nigerian broadcast media emerges as a vital channel for climate change and environmental communication. Radio and television, with their affordability and extensive reach, provide platforms through which climate change awareness can be translated into culturally meaningful narratives for both urban and rural audiences.

Notwithstanding, the effectiveness of broadcast media in driving climate change awareness is not determined solely by message frequency or clarity, but also by the cultural relevance and resonance of the content delivered. Communication detached from people's lived experiences and cultural context often fails to influence attitudes or trigger behavioural change. This underscores the value of indigenous art forms in broadcast media such as music, folktales, drama, proverbs, dance, and oral poetry as strategic tools for climate advocacy. Deeply rooted in Nigerian culture, these forms serve as instruments of knowledge sharing and communal mobilisation (Saawuan et al., 2023). Their familiarity and emotional appeal make them powerful in shaping social values. When integrated into media programming, they localise global climate discourse and translate scientific messages into relatable narratives that motivate community action. These forms are familiar, emotionally engaging, and culturally grounded, making them powerful in shaping social norms and values. Their creative integration into climate-themed broadcasts underscores the participatory communication model, which emphasises dialogue, cultural sensitivity, and bottom-up engagement rather than one-way expert-driven dissemination of information (Chinweobo-Onuoha et al., 2020). This approach positions indigenous art forms as mediators between modern scientific knowledge and traditional cultural wisdom.

Despite the potentials of indigenous arts forms in creating vivid, personally relevant, and affective images of climate change in the minds of audience, questions remain about their effective contributions to climate change awareness and mitigation behaviour. While anecdotal evidence suggests that culturally resonant media content enhances audience understanding, there is limited empirical evidence on its actual influence on climate change knowledge, attitudes, and practices across different Nigerian populations (Sheshi & Yisa, 2024). There are

also concerns about the tension between modernisation of media content and the preservation of indigenous communication traditions. As Nigerian broadcast media becomes increasingly commercialised and globalised, indigenous art forms risk being sidelined in favour of Westernised formats perceived as more "modern." This could potentially alter and undermine the cultural relevance of climate change communication. Against this backdrop, this study seeks to evaluate the contribution of indigenous art forms in Nigerian broadcast media to climate change awareness and mitigation behaviour.

Statement of the Problem

Although broadcast media in Nigeria has the potential to reach vast and diverse audiences, conventional approaches to environmental programming often fail to resonate with grassroots communities. Messages that rely heavily on scientific jargon or foreign communication models tend to alienate rural and semi-literate populations, limiting their effectiveness in mobilising collective action against climate risks. This gap highlights the urgent need for culturally relevant communication strategies that can bridge the divide between global climate discourse and local realities. Indigenous art forms such as folk music, drama, storytelling, and proverbs have historically functioned as powerful channels for knowledge transmission and social mobilisation in Nigerian societies. However, despite their potential, the actual contribution of indigenous art forms to climate change awareness and mitigation behaviours in Nigeria remains underexplored. Existing studies have focused largely on the role of broadcast media in environmental communication in general, with limited empirical attention to how indigenous artistic expressions specifically shape public perception and action. This trend risks diluting the cultural relevance of climate change communication and environmental advocacy, and undermining its effectiveness in driving behavioural change in Nigeria. This study therefore addresses a critical gap by examining the role of indigenous art forms in Nigerian broadcast media and their impact on climate change awareness and mitigation behaviour.

Research Questions

The broad objective of this study is to evaluate the contribution of indigenous art forms in Nigerian broadcast media to climate change awareness and mitigation behaviour. Consequently, the following research questions are put forward to guide the study:

1. To what extent are indigenous art forms such as music, drama, storytelling, and proverbs integrated into climate change programming in Nigerian broadcast media?
2. How effective are indigenous art forms in enhancing audience awareness and understanding of climate change issues in Nigeria?
3. In what ways does indigenous art-based broadcast content influence audience attitudes and behavioural responses toward climate change mitigation?
4. How do indigenous art forms resonate culturally with Nigerian audiences, and their perceptions of climate change?

Indigenous Art Forms and Broadcast Media Climate Communication in Nigeria

Broadcast media, particularly radio and television remain among the most influential platforms for shaping public attitudes toward social issues in Nigeria and across Africa. Their ability to integrate diverse art forms such as music, drama, storytelling, talk shows, and jingles makes them effective vehicles for climate change communication (Adekaa et al., 2024). Unlike purely scientific reports that may alienate the public, broadcast art forms simplify complex climate concepts into culturally relatable narratives, enhancing comprehension and engagement. Art-

infused broadcasts play a critical role in framing climate change as both an urgent global crisis and a local lived reality that requires behavioural response (Ademolu, 2023; Li & Su, 2018; Sanusi & Ojewumi, 2024; Seelig, 2019).

Drama and storytelling are central to broadcast art forms used in climate communication because they provide audiences with opportunities to emotionally connect with climate issues. Radio or television serial dramas depicting families affected by flooding, drought, or deforestation enable audiences to empathize with characters while simultaneously learning adaptation strategies (Sanusi & Ojewumi, 2024). Such formats also employ narrative persuasion, where storylines lower resistance to information by embedding it in entertainment. This method has been shown to foster not just awareness but also favourable attitudes toward climate-friendly behaviours, as listeners and viewers model their responses after admired characters in the narratives (Ademolu, 2023).

Music and proverbs integrated into broadcast campaigns function as mnemonic and cultural devices that reinforce climate messages (Wodak, 2018). Indigenous songs infused with local instruments and languages can heighten emotional resonance and memorability, making messages about tree planting, waste management, or water conservation easier to recall. Proverbs, on the other hand, condense wisdom into short, culturally authoritative statements that audiences accept as truth. By packaging climate information in culturally recognizable forms, music and proverbs not only enhance retention but also legitimize climate communication, creating positive attitudes toward mitigation measures (Xie, 2024).

Broadcast art forms influence audience attitudes primarily by shaping awareness levels and risk perception. Programmes that creatively dramatise the consequences of climate inaction, such as depicting food shortages due to erratic rainfall, help audiences link climate issues to their immediate wellbeing (Fosudo, 2024). As risk perception increases, so too does willingness to adopt preventive and adaptive behaviours. However, scholars note that awareness alone is insufficient; for attitudes to translate into behavioural change, messages must also enhance self-efficacy by showing audiences that they have the capacity to act and that their collective action matters. Despite their effectiveness, broadcast art forms face challenges in influencing attitudes uniformly. Variations in literacy, cultural identity, media access, and socio-economic status affect how different audience groups interpret climate messages. This implies that rural listeners may resonate strongly with proverbs and folk songs, while urban youth may respond better to hip-hop-infused jingles or social-media-linked broadcast campaigns (Jingala & Chaudhry, 2024).

Broadcast Media Art Forms and Audience Attitudes Toward Climate Change Mitigation

Audience studies repeatedly show that culturally proximate formats shape climate attitudes through three pathways: credibility (trusted voices and idioms), identification (seeing oneself in characters), and norming (proverbs and songs that signal what “people like us” do). When messages sound like home language choice, cadence, humour, they feel less like instruction and more like shared wisdom, increasing perceived relevance and fairness and, in turn, openness to mitigation advice (Rawlyk & Willness, 2025). Narratives and proverbs do more than persuade; they provide mental scripts for future action. Radio dramas that show neighbours inspecting drainage, mothers re-timing cooking to off-peak power, or farmers adjusting planting calendars turn abstract exhortations into doable steps. Call-in segments and SMS/WhatsApp integrations let listeners rehearse decisions aloud, receive social

reinforcement, and refine plans, classic conditions for strengthening intention (specificity, self-efficacy, social support).

Behaviour change consolidates when broadcast content reduces friction. Clear cues ("this Saturday, bring two seedlings to the community square"), local exemplars ("Aisha's women's group switched to improved stoves"), and visible feedback ("before/after" flood photos) help listeners cross the intention–action gap (Bennett, 2025). Music's mnemonic power sustains routines, short refrains attached to water-saving or waste-sorting behaviours become household prompts. When stations coordinate with local authorities or NGOs to provide access (seedlings, bins, micro-credit), uptake rises because the cost of action falls. Impact varies with literacy, income, gender norms, and media access. Women and youth may engage more with music and drama but have less control over household resources; pastoral or riverine communities need region-specific cues; displaced or peri-urban listeners may prioritise immediate survival over long-term mitigation (Pop-Jordanova, 2025). Moreover, misinformation circulating on social or interpersonal networks can dilute broadcast effects. Effective campaigns therefore layer indigenous formats with myth-busting segments, peer testimonials, and bridge content that anticipate counter-arguments.

The cultural resonance of indigenous art forms in Nigerian broadcast media lies in their ability to embed climate change communication within familiar traditions of collective expression and meaning-making. This resonance strengthens the credibility of messages and fosters identification, as audiences perceive the communication as rooted in their own heritage rather than imposed externally. Evidence suggests that when climate information is packaged in culturally sensitive ways, it enhances not only comprehension but also trust, making audiences more receptive to adopting mitigation behaviours (Ugwuoke et al., 2025). Thus, cultural resonance acts as a bridge between scientific discourse and grassroots understanding, allowing climate change to be framed as a local, lived concern rather than a distant global phenomenon.

The strongest audience outcomes emerge when indigenous art forms are embedded in iterative, participatory cycles: community co-creation to surface lived constraints; serial storytelling to normalize behaviour; musical refrains to maintain salience; and periodic community broadcasts from markets, town halls, or festivals to refresh norms publicly (Miller et al., 2017). Evaluation designs that track both attitudinal shifts (risk perception, self-efficacy) and behavioural indicators (participation counts, sales or distribution of adaptation tools, observed environmental practices) help stations learn which cultural levers matter most, and for whom, so future content can be targeted, equitable, and scalable (Huxley, 2025).

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the premise of Agenda-Setting Theory and Cultural Theory, which provide complementary perspectives for evaluating how indigenous art forms in Nigerian broadcast media influence climate change awareness and mitigation behaviour.

Agenda-Setting Theory: Agenda-setting theory is a media effect theory that explains how the media influences the public's perception of issue importance by focusing attention on certain topics and their attributes. Introduced by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in 1972, the theory, posits that the media may not always tell people what to think, but it significantly influences what people think about by giving salience to certain issues through repeated emphasis and framing (McCombs et al., 2018). In the context of this study, the theory underscores the power of Nigerian broadcast media to elevate climate change as a public

concern by embedding it in culturally resonant art forms such as music, drama, storytelling, and proverbs. When these indigenous art forms are strategically used in programming, they draw public attention to environmental issues and make them part of everyday conversation. Thus, agenda-setting explains how the consistent use of culturally grounded broadcast content can shape audience priorities, stimulate dialogue, and encourage collective action on climate change mitigation.

Cultural Theory: Cultural theory examines how culture influences and shapes individuals and societies. Developed by Stuart Hall (1980), cultural theory posits that human behaviour is deeply rooted in the collective cultural values and historical experiences of a society, arguing that cultural values, beliefs, and practices influence behaviour and attitudes within a society. According to Liu et al. (2023), cultural theory posits that different societies may exhibit distinct cultural practices based on their unique traditions, social structures, and interactions. The theory also hold that media messages are interpreted through cultural frameworks with symbols, rituals, and myths playing a crucial role in shaping people's behaviours and identification with issues. The theory argues that communication cannot be divorced from culture, as audiences interpret and internalise media messages through their cultural frameworks (Scammell & Bielsa, 2022). Indigenous art forms, deeply rooted in Nigerian traditions, provide symbolic codes that audiences easily understand and identify with. Thus, the use of proverbs to highlight the consequences of deforestation or drama skits to illustrate flooding aligns the climate change challenge and environmental issues with pre-existing cultural narratives, thereby making abstract climate science tangible and relatable.

Cultural Theory complements Agenda-Setting Theory by examining how media messages interact with cultural norms, traditions, and symbolic practices to influence meaning-making. It provides a lens to understand how traditional forms of expression resonate with diverse Nigerian audiences and foster attitudinal and behavioural change toward climate adaptation and mitigation. Agenda-Setting explains the role of broadcast media in prioritizing climate change as a critical social issue, Cultural Theory demonstrates how indigenous art forms ensure that such issues are communicated in ways that are culturally meaningful and socially engaging. The theoretical framework provides a robust foundation for this study by highlighting the importance of culturally embedded communication strategies in bridging the knowledge-action gap, ensuring that climate change messages do not only reach audiences but also inspire awareness, resonance, and behavioural transformation.

Research Design

This study employed a mixed-method research design, integrating qualitative content analysis to examine selected broadcast programmes to identify the integration of indigenous art forms in communicating climate-related issues, and in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, including broadcasters, climate advocates, and cultural communicators, to explore the intent, design, and perceived impact of the use of indigenous art in climate communication. Using purposive sampling, ten radio and ten television programmes aired between 2020 and 2024 that integrated indigenous art forms such as music, drama, storytelling, and proverbs were analysed to identify patterns in message framing, symbolic representation, and calls to action. In addition, twelve broadcasters, environmental advocates, and cultural communicators (two from each of the six geopolitical zones) were interviewed to explore the intent, design, challenges, and perceived audience impact of such content. Data were analysed thematically using Nvivo, with findings triangulated across both content and interviews to enhance validity. Ethical considerations were observed through informed consent, confidentiality, and transparent data

coding. While the study provides valuable insights into the role of culturally grounded communication in fostering climate awareness and mitigation behaviour, its scope is limited to selected programmes and practitioner perspectives, excluding direct audience reception.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The data collected for this study is presented in this section thematically starting with data from content analysis in line with the study objectives and illustrative excerpts from programme content; and followed by themes from the interview transcripts. The themes are organised based on recurring patterns observed across the programmes, supported by illustrative excerpts and triangulated with insights from the in-depth interviews with broadcasters, climate advocates, and cultural communicators.

Integration of Indigenous Art Forms in Broadcast Programming

The content analysis showed that radio and television stations frequently used folk music, proverbs, and dramatised skits to simplify complex climate change concepts and abstract global systems such ascarbon emissions, atmospheric gas concentrations, and global temperature difficult for indigenous people in Nigeria especially non-literates to understand into observable local phenomena like fluctuating rainfall, droughts, flooding and deforestation. Out of the 20 programmes reviewed, 13 incorporated songs in local languages to reinforce environmental messages, while 11 relied on proverbs and idioms to contextualise climate-related advice. The findings signify that indigenous art forms do more than communicate messages, they serve as archives of ecological knowledge and advocacy tools rooted in local cosmologies that use ancestral wisdom in framing climate change as a familiar, cyclical challenge rather than an abstract scientific concept.

Interview data aligns with findings from the content analysis by revealing that broadcasters intentionally integrate indigenous art forms to enhance engagement and cultural connection. One radio producer from Kaduna noted that “when we use proverbs or traditional songs, the listeners lean in more closely, because they hear their own culture speaking back to them.” Environmental advocates stressed that indigenous elements help simplify technical climate jargon, while cultural communicators explained that folktales and songs provide continuity between ancestral wisdom and modern challenges. A television director highlighted that “our drama segments are not complete without a folk song; it is what roots the story in the people’s lived reality.”

Message Framing and Symbolic Representation

The data revealed that both radio and television programmes relied heavily on indigenous art forms to symbolically represent the consequences of environmental neglect as well as the benefits of adopting sustainable practices. Rather than presenting climate change as an abstract scientific issue, these programmes translated it into cultural narratives familiar to audiences. Television skits frequently dramatised scenes of community meetings where elders used storytelling to warn younger generations about the dangers of desertification, flooding, and crop failure. In one Hausa-language drama, an elder reminded the youth that “a tree does not stand alone in the forest; its strength is in the company of others,” a proverb symbolically linking environmental preservation to community solidarity. Songs also played a central role in reframing environmental issues, often embedding climate-related messages within folk melodies or popular indigenous rhythms; and emphasises collective responsibility by

portraying the environment as a shared heritage that must be safeguarded for future generations. For example, a Tiv-language jingle used in a climate-awareness campaign repeated the refrain “the land that feeds us is the land we must protect,” tying environmental stewardship to food security and survival. The findings further show that 75% of the programmes analysed, explicitly framed climate change as a communal issue rather than an individual one, indicating a clear shift in how indigenous art facilitated meaning-making. This symbolic framing helped to reposition climate discourse from being seen as a distant or technical challenge to one that is embedded within everyday life and cultural practices.

Data from the interview supports findings from the content analysis with vivid depictions. Respondents emphasised that indigenous art forms often symbolise the moral and cultural dimensions of climate change. An advocate from the South-East explained that “we don’t just talk about soil erosion as science, we show it through stories of a greedy hunter whose forest disappears.” Broadcasters noted that framing climate issues symbolically rather than technically made the messages more memorable. A cultural communicator added that “when we say ‘the earth is like a mother who feeds us,’ people understand care and responsibility immediately.” Such framing shifted climate change from a distant, technical problem to a relatable moral and cultural issue.

Calls to Action and Behavioural Orientation

Another strong theme emerging from the data is the deliberate use of indigenous art forms to stimulate behavioural change through clear calls to action. Out of the twenty programmes reviewed, twelve contained explicit appeals urging audiences to adopt specific mitigation practices through responsible livelihood practices in agriculture, livestock, vegetation, mining, fishing, forestry, foraging and bartering such as planting trees, reducing bush burning, managing waste responsibly and embracing sustainable farming methods. These messages were not presented as external impositions but were embedded in the cultural and moral language of the community. For example, two Tiv-language folk songs integrated into climate change radio advocacy programmes warned against excessive reliance on chemicals and urged farmers to “keep the soil alive” by abandoning slash-and-burn techniques, while a Yoruba radio drama depicted the tragic loss of farmland due to flooding as a direct result of ignoring traditional farming wisdom. Such calls were reinforced by the symbolic weight of indigenous proverbs and folktales, which made the recommended behaviours, appear as natural extensions of existing cultural values rather than foreign prescriptions.

These behavioural appeals were often designed to maximise recall and resonance by relying on repetition, rhythm, and emotional connection. For instance, several jingles employed catchy refrains and traditional drumming patterns that made climate-friendly messages easier to memorise and share in everyday conversations. In an Igbo-language television skit, the closing scene showed children planting trees while chanting a proverb that compared nurturing saplings to raising future generations, symbolically binding environmental protection to cultural continuity. This creative integration of art-based communication not only increased the memorability of the calls to action but also strengthened their persuasive appeal. By embedding climate advocacy within the familiar structures of indigenous music, drama, and proverbs, the programmes demonstrated the potential of culturally grounded communication to move audiences beyond awareness toward tangible behavioural shifts.

Perspectives of the interview participants align with the content analysis data as the interviewees highlighted how indigenous art-based programming consistently incorporated

calls to action. Out of the twelve interviewees, nine confirmed that programmes they worked on used songs, jingles, or proverbs to push behavioural change. A broadcaster from Benue explained, "We end every drama with a proverb that tells farmers what to do, and the most efficient environmental sustaining methods to adopt in order to conserve the forests and secure the future." Advocates observed that rhythm and repetition in songs made calls to action stick. One cultural communicator stressed that "when the song says 'plant today for tomorrow,' people remember it even in the market." This combination of culture and directive messaging was seen as key to driving real behavioural orientation.

Culturally Resonate Indigenous Art Forms and Perceptions of Climate Change

The role of cultural familiarity in shaping how Nigerian audiences connect with climate change messages delivered through indigenous art forms in broadcasting emerged as another important theme in this study. Respondents consistently emphasised that when climate information was communicated through recognisable cultural mediums such as folk songs, proverbs, and storytelling, it was not only easier to understand but also carried greater legitimacy. Unlike scientific terms such as carbon emissions or greenhouse gases, which many rural audiences described as abstract or confusing, traditional expressions framed environmental issues in moral, spiritual, and social terms that resonated with everyday realities. For instance, a popular Igbo proverb used in a radio programme "a man who cuts down the iroko tree cuts down his children's shade" was frequently cited by listeners as more persuasive than technical explanations about deforestation. Such culturally embedded narratives anchored climate change discourse in local knowledge systems, making it feel less like an external imposition and more like an extension of existing wisdom.

The content analysis further revealed that the integration of traditional folktales and dramatisations into broadcast media enabled audiences to perceive climate change not as a distant, global phenomenon, but as a pressing local concern. For example, stories of rivers drying up after being disrespected by careless villagers through deforestation and chemical farming practices served as symbolic warnings that mirrored contemporary issues of drought and water scarcity in Nigeria. This framing bridged the gap between ancestral ecological teachings and modern scientific insights, reinforcing the notion that environmental stewardship is both a cultural duty and a survival strategy. Interviewees explained that such messages evoked strong emotional responses, especially when delivered through music and drama rooted in local traditions, thereby reinforcing communal responsibility toward nature. In this way, cultural familiarity functioned as a bridge, transforming complex climate discourse into accessible, morally charged communication that resonated with audiences and motivated reflection on sustainable practices.

Data from the interview supports the findings as all interviewees unanimously agreed that cultural resonance determines how audiences perceive climate change content. A cultural advocate from the Niger Delta observed that "when we sing in our dialect, people trust the message more than when we speak English." Broadcasters confirmed that local art forms created a sense of ownership, while one environmental campaigner stated that "proverbs carry wisdom; when we say 'if you dry the river, you dry your children's future,' everyone takes it seriously." Cultural communicators further noted that resonance was not only about language but also about emotional connection. As one put it, "The message enters their hearts because it comes in the tune they grew up with."

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study underscore the centrality of indigenous art forms in enhancing climate communication within Nigerian broadcast media. Consistent with Cultural Theory, the study shows that folk songs, proverbs, storytelling, and dramatization function as cultural codes that bridge abstract scientific discourse with lived realities. This aligns with Saawuan et al. (2023), who highlighted indigenous communication as an effective means of embedding complex issues within familiar cultural frameworks. By reframing climate change in moral and symbolic terms, broadcasters succeeded in making messages resonate with local audiences. Agenda-Setting Theory is also validated here, as broadcast media effectively prioritized climate change by embedding it in culturally familiar narratives that compelled audiences to pay attention and internalize environmental issues.

Message framing and symbolic representation were revealed as powerful mechanisms for climate change communication. Rather than relying on technical jargon, indigenous art reframed issues like deforestation, flooding, and desertification through moral metaphors and collective values. This finding resonates with Roosen et al. (2018), who observed that science-heavy messages often fail to inspire behavioural change when stripped of narrative depth. In Nigerian broadcasts, symbolic expressions such as "the earth is like a mother who feeds us" transformed environmental care into a moral obligation, thereby reinforcing cultural responsibility. This demonstrates that indigenous art not only complements but strengthens conventional environmental education by offering audiences culturally grounded interpretive lenses.

The role of calls to action further revealed the pragmatic potential of art-based communication. Through repetition, rhythm, and culturally familiar refrains, climate change messages were made memorable and actionable. Examples like Tiv and Yoruba folk songs encouraging farmers to "keep the soil alive" show how art can directly guide behaviour. This supports Burke et al. (2018), who argue that communication which connects with people's lived experiences is more likely to trigger behavioural change. Within the agenda-setting framework, this demonstrates how broadcast media can go beyond raising awareness to shaping concrete livelihood practices by embedding directives in culturally persuasive forms.

Cultural resonance emerged as perhaps the most decisive factor shaping perceptions of climate change. Both the content analysis and interview data affirm that Nigerian audiences trust and internalize messages better when they are rooted in indigenous traditions. This echoes Chinweobo-Onuoha et al. (2020), who emphasised that participatory, culturally sensitive communication is more effective than top-down dissemination. By integrating proverbs such as "a man who cuts down the iroko tree cuts down his children's shade," climate discourse was legitimised as ancestral wisdom, creating continuity between tradition and modern environmental advocacy. This confirms that culturally familiar messaging not only enhances comprehension but also fosters emotional and moral identification with climate stewardship.

The findings also reveal that indigenous art-based broadcasts foster communal identification and solidarity in responding to climate threats. Literature on cultural imperialism critiques globalised, top-down communication for erasing local voices; however, this study suggests the opposite, that local broadcast media, by privileging indigenous art, can resist homogenisation and assert cultural agency in framing climate issues. The study's findings signify that by positioning climate change as a collective moral responsibility, the programmes reaffirmed the role of culture in strengthening communal resilience. This contribution is particularly important

in Nigeria, where literacy barriers and cultural diversity often challenge the effectiveness of standard scientific communication.

Conclusion

The study has demonstrated that indigenous art forms embedded within Nigerian broadcast media play a vital role in localising global climate discourse and making it culturally meaningful. Through indigenous music, proverbs, drama, and storytelling, broadcasters in Nigeria effectively translate technical scientific information into familiar narratives that resonate with diverse audiences. These cultural tools not only simplified climate concepts but also enhanced audience engagement, fostered communal responsibility, and encouraged behavioural change toward sustainable practices. The findings show that indigenous art-based broadcasts do more than raise awareness, they shape perceptions, influence priorities, and legitimise climate advocacy within local cultural frameworks. The study thus concludes that harnessing indigenous art in media programming strengthens the cultural ownership of climate communication, bridges the gap between global knowledge and local realities, and contributes to fostering sustainable livelihood practices.

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