

# EXPLORING THE USES OF ARABIC LANGUAGE IN NIGERIA BROADCAST MEDIA: PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES.

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## Abstract

This study investigates the impact and challenges of the Arabic language in Nigeria broadcast media in southwestern Nigeria. This language is historically linked to Islamic scholarship and religious practices from the time immemorial in this part of the country. It continues to hold cultural and religious significance, particularly among Muslim communities. However, its role in broadcast media is not usually heartened due to competition with dominant languages like English and Yoruba. This research examines the presence of Arabic language in various media platforms, including radio, television, social media, and religious broadcasts, also analyzing its influence on religious discourse, education, and cultural preservation. The study also explores the tenacity of the language as a world-rated language of communication, but with the limited media professionals that possessed the required proficiency in Arabic in this region. Descriptive and Analytical method would be implored in giving

needed analysis in justifying the available facts. Findings reveal that while Arabic remains a key medium for religious and educational purposes, its broader integration into broadcast media is hindered by linguistic, sociocultural, and technological barriers. The study contributes to a deeper understanding of the dynamics of language use in the region's media landscape and offers recommendations for enhancing Arabic's role in broadcast media communication in southwestern Nigeria, for its capability to be used as a medium to reach out to people for dissemination of information.

**Keywords:** Exploring, Arabic language, Broadcast media, Prospects, Challenges.

## Introduction:

It is the believe of a lay man that Arabic language is a language of religion, forgetting the fact that it resonates and evolves around all spheres of human endeavors. The usefulness of the language is practically span beyond religious rituals. The uses of the language have gone beyond the religious

dimension to include various fields of communication. It is also considered an effective tool in areas such as public speaking, writing, media, and journalism, as it contributes to conveying ideas, documenting news, and spreading culture. Arabic is used in advertisements and signs in some cities, reflecting its important role in the public sphere and its contribution to cultural heritage in major Arab cities. Moreover, Arabic has played a major role in communication through letters, whether official or personal, especially among speakers of the language as a means of exchanging information and news, as well as transmitting knowledge and sciences globally.

### **Statements of Problem**

The problem addressed in this study arises from the longstanding desire of the Nigerian Muslim Ummah, especially in the southwest, to establish a broadcast medium that promotes Islamic ideologies and supports Arabic teaching and learning among linguistic experts. However, to date, Muslims in Nigeria face significant challenges in finding a practical broadcast outlet for Arabic. The limited broadcast options available are highly competitive and restrictive, often sidelining Arabic as a foreign language due to perceptions of its limited marketability, reach, and accessibility. Additionally, media policies and funding constraints have contributed to the marginalization of Arabic within Nigeria's media landscape, hindering its development and visibility as a viable language for broader communication and cultural engagement.

### **Aim and Objectives**

This study aims to broaden understanding and appreciation of Arabic language, moving beyond its association solely with religious rituals to recognize its value across various facets of life, including global media, literature, and cultural exchange. It seeks to inspire Arabic language experts in southwestern Nigeria to embrace the language's potential for international recognition and overcome any limiting perceptions of Arabic's utility, exploring its diverse applications. The study emphasizes Arabic's enduring impact on societies as a versatile tool for professional, intellectual, and social engagement, enriching human connections and contributing to knowledge across different fields.

### **Intersection of Arabic and Communication**

The Arabic language, with its deep historical, cultural, and religious roots, holds a prominent place in global communication, particularly within the Islamic world. Its intricate structure, expansive vocabulary, and unique script make it a significant medium for conveying messages and vital information, ideas, religious teachings, literature, and scholarly works according to submission made by Wissal Al Allaq (2014, p. 113). The intersection of Arabic and communication is a fascinating area of study that sheds light on how language shapes by the exchange of information, cultural identity, and technological advancement.

The intersection of Arabic and communication has historical roots, beginning with the spread of Islam in the 7th century, which elevated Arabic as a sacred language. With its role in transmitting the Quran and facilitating the spread of Islamic teachings, Arabic

became a critical means of communication across the Muslim world, fostering cultural and intellectual exchange. In the Islamic Golden Age, Arabic was the language of science, philosophy, and medicine, with scholars producing texts that would shape Western thought, as noted by Hitti (2002) and Gutas (1998). The language's significance in intellectual discourse solidified its role as a medium for preserving and disseminating knowledge. Even recently, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashed Al Maktoum reiterated his plan in making Arabic language a multipurpose language, giving importance to its usage in media engagement in this statement:

*“Sheikh Al Maktoum has identified five areas in which Arabic language should be cultivated; these areas are “education, media, Arabisation, technology, preservation and dissemination of the Arab linguistic heritage” (Al Allaq, 2014). In modern times, Arabic has become an influential language in mass media, particularly in satellite television, print, and online platforms. Arabic media outlets like Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya provide content that reaches millions, representing the voice and perspective of the Arab world on the global stage (Mellor, 2011). The rise of digital communication has also transformed Arabic usage, particularly through the emergence of "Arabizi," a mix of Arabic and Latin characters, which demonstrates Arabic's adaptability in online communication (Palfreyman & Al Khalil, 2003). Although the Arabic digital landscape faces challenges like technological limitations, efforts to promote Arabic content online continue to grow, supporting the language's modernization and accessibility (Alkhatib, 2016).*

Arabic is also integral to cultural identity and political discourse, serving as a unifying language across the Arab world. It bridges cultural gaps and enables communication within and beyond Arabic-speaking communities, especially in diplomatic and international contexts (Zaharna, 1995). Arabic's adaptation to new media forms, alongside traditional uses in literature, oral traditions, and religious practices, highlights its resilience and versatility. As the language evolves to meet modern communication demands, its role remains central in shaping Arab identity and fostering dialogue on a global scale. The intersection of Arabic and communication reflects the language's evolution from a sacred medium of religious and scholarly discourse to a dynamic tool for global media, digital communication, and cultural exchange. Arabic continues to adapt to changing communication landscapes, preserving its historical legacy while embracing modernity. As the demand for Arabic content in media, education, and technology grows, Arabic will remain a key player in global communication, shaping and enriching human interaction across languages and cultures.

### **Role of Language in National Development**

An African nation with a history of British colonization that is bilingual, pluralistic, and diverse is Nigeria. It follows naturally from these differences that language becomes a key component of personal identity and a social-political tool for communication across political and cultural divides. In the words of Adetugbo (1979 as quoted in Ogundimu (2019), the colonial language that the imperialists left the

country further complicates this environment. Therefore, given the diverse political, cultural, cognitive, and economic roles language plays in the socio-political architecture of a nation, the discussion has focused on what language or languages should operate in people's daily lives. Scholars have adopted varying opinions on this topic that are controversial and debatable (Ogundimu, 2019). Due to its religious standing, the Arabic language has a significant influence on Muslims worldwide. In the seventh century AD, the Arabic language, which originated on the Arabian Peninsula, spread throughout North Africa. Unquestionably, North Africa and West African kingdoms like Ghana, Gao, and Timbuktu had a trading relationship. Together with a few other regions in the region, Kanem-Borno, Kano, and Katsina were later separated from Biladu-Sudan (now West Africa) and renamed Nigeria (Niger area). Arabs were at the forefront of traders who interacted with West Africans following the Islamic conquest of North Africa. This business relationship between West Africans and Arabs. Before English became the primary language of education, Arabic served as the official language of education, information, and social interaction in Northern Nigeria. It successfully fulfilled media functions (Ayuba, 2011). Even though Arabic scholars have stressed the need for better Arabic instruction, it can still be argued that if Northern Nigeria had been permitted to continue using Arabic as her primary language of instruction, her educational progress would have been on par with that of Arabist North African nations. Most Nigerian Muslims, both in the North and South, still favor

Arabic over English. Because of this, Arabic schools have persisted in opening and competing favourably with English ones in terms of student enrolment and parental support. We cannot emphasize enough the importance of Arabic in creating the country we desire. The meaning of "development" vary depending on the situation. Consequently, social scientists and economists have held differing views about what exactly qualifies as development. Agriculturalists and economists place a different emphasis on what developers consider being development. Farmers prioritize agricultural output as a measure of development, while economists prioritize per capita income growth. The description provided by W. Rodney, used by M. This study adopts S. Bawa's definition to characterize development in any human civilization as a multifaceted process with significant repercussions not only on the political sphere but also on the economic sphere.

### **Nigeria and its Language Policy**

According to Harrison and Ayodele (2023), Acheoah, J. E., & Olaleye, J. I. (2019) claimed that the nation lacked a proper language policy and that the only documents that existed were pieces of different texts that discussed different parts of the policy. These include the Nigerian Constitution, the National Broadcasting Commission Codes, the National Policy on Education, and the Cultural Policy for Nigeria. It was evident that the various branches of government merely made token efforts to execute these texts, even though they were available. Additionally, the provisions of Nigeria's Language

Policy, which was recently published anticipated to set the direction for the development, use, and control of languages. Scholars believe that the lack of a language strategy has prevented the nation from making significant progress thus far. This reaffirms the equality of all Nigerian languages. Additionally, it aims to empower all Nigerian languages by means of modern, creative transformative processes that allow users to express their creative capacities for contributing to national and international knowledge resources while preserving their cultural identity. Since a global audience access news and information from domestic news outlets and from international news organizations or news agencies where such news suit their media ecology and foreign policy, the use of foreign languages by media outlets that have embraced the Internet revolution is crucial to a country's growth and development, particularly culturally and economically (Matyek, 2019). No Nigerian news media organization has a website that translates its content or webcasts (live or on-demand video and audio broadcasts over the Internet) into a foreign language, with the exception of Voice of Nigeria (VON), which broadcasts radio to a global audience in English and foreign languages like French, Swahili, and Fulfulde.

### **Arabic in Contemporary Nigerian Media**

With the expanding influence of commercial media businesses, Arabic has found a new outlet in contemporary Nigerian television and radio. Several private radio stations and television networks, mainly in the northern portion of the country, have produced Arabic-language programming to respond to the need for religious and cultural content. These

stations generally provide original content in Arabic, ranging from chat shows and documentaries to news broadcasts and cultural programming.

The advent of satellite television and the availability of international Arabic channels, such as Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya, has further integrated Arabic into the Nigerian media scene. Nigerian media consumers, especially in urban areas, have increasingly tuned in to these global Arabic-language news sites to stay informed about current events from an Islamic perspective. This tendency has created a vibrant area for Arabic-language media in Nigeria, which complements local material and facilitates increased connection between Nigeria and the larger Arab world. The expansion of Arabic programming was more prominent following the construction of radio stations in the northern states, which carried Islamic content in Arabic to cater to local populations. With the development of satellite television in the 1990s, Arabic programming expanded beyond radio to include television, with several private and government-owned TV stations showing content in Arabic. This was also a moment when Nigeria's substantial Muslim community was growing increasingly assertive in the public realm, and media programming in Arabic served to build a sense of communal identification and belonging. The most significant role that Arabic has played in Nigerian broadcast programming is in the sphere of religious material. Despite being essential to Nigeria's religious, cultural, and linguistic diversity, the use of Arabic in broadcast programming poses a number of difficult issues and opportunities that need for careful consideration from sociocultural and political

viewpoints. Arabic serves as a significant tool for religious broadcasting, particularly in communicating Islamic teachings, connecting Nigerian Muslims to the global Islamic community, and encouraging Arabic language education. However, the prominence of Arabic in Nigeria's media environment also presents some problematic concerns that demand scholarly consideration. One of the key worries is the potential for Arabic's dominance in certain parts of Nigerian broadcast media to deepen religious and ethnic tensions in the country. As a predominantly Muslim language, Arabic's increasing visibility in public broadcasts, particularly in the northern regions, could inadvertently contribute to the marginalization of non-Muslim populations, particularly Christians and adherents of indigenous religions, who may not engage with Arabic programming. This issue of media inclusivity is essential in a country like Nigeria, where ethnicity, religion, and language are often linked in intricate ways. The issue, therefore, comes in balancing the promotion of Arabic as a significant cultural and religious resource for the Muslim community with the requirement for media diversity that reflects the different language and cultural fabric of the nation (Adegbite, 2018; Ibrahim, 2016).

Arabic is the liturgical language of Islam, and its usage in religious broadcasting shows the primacy of the language in Islamic traditions. Islamic broadcasters, both governmental and privately owned, offer programs in Arabic ranging from Qur'anic recitations to Islamic sermons, seminars,

and news updates on religious subjects (Ibrahim, 2016).

### **Broadcast Media and Promotion of Arabic Language**

The broadcast media plays an important function of social responsibility with respect to the languages to be used in order to fulfil this responsibility, which includes helping to ensure "democratizing, freedom of speech, and information dissemination" (Mpofu & Mutasa 2014). Given that the significance and popularity of the languages employed in the media are raised, the broadcast media are thus portrayed as both language policy and language planning agents.

The mass media, including radio, television, satellite channels, the press, and other significant cultural and educational tools, can play an unmatched role in promoting Arabic, attracting people to it, and curing them of the tyranny of colloquialisms that permeate every aspect of life. These devices are a part of our Arab lifestyle; they have infiltrated every home, won over everyone's hearts and souls with their allure and seduction, and are now used for sabotage and devastation. Arab media have started to publicly promote colloquialisms, or slang language, which has increased their hubris. The majority of programs on satellite channels are broadcast in colloquial language rather than the original or root language. It was more than just dramas and serials. The relationship between Islam and Arabic is one of the most amazing wonders of Islam, and the Arabic language is regarded as one of the ties that bind the Muslim world together. By transforming the language into a tool of intellect, spirit, and religion,

Islam has expanded its use and opened the door for others to join under the Islamic banner. Learn Arabic and build civilization because civilization, to put it succinctly, is a language, and civilization only came about through language. While the use of Arabic in local programming or even at the regional level has received little attention, the majority of empirical research on the function of broadcast media in promoting foreign languages has been on national public broadcast stations that employ French and English. This is especially suitable for this type of research for two reasons. The study is feasible because, first of all, Arabic is an international language and is required in more than twelve states in Nigeria. The Arabic language has been "occasionally largely the dominant language among the Muslim intellectual given much attention" The importance of Arabic in Nigerian radio broadcasts began in the 1960s with radio programs targeted at educating Muslim listeners about Islamic doctrines, law, and culture. In the northern regions, where Arabic and Islam were deeply ingrained, early broadcasts featured religious recitations from the Qur'an, as well as lectures on Islamic history and law (Adebayo, 2013). These broadcasts were not merely confined to religious content but also contained debates on social and political problems that were of concern to the Muslim community, further solidifying Arabic as a vital language of public discourse. Arabic-language programming is frequently broadcast by a number of Nigerian radio and television stations, including the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) and regional channels in the northern states, particularly during the Islamic

holy months of Ramadan and Hajj. These programs feature Qur'anic recitation, Islamic teachings, news from the Islamic world, and live broadcasting of religious events. Arabic is employed in such a way that even non-Arabic speakers may appreciate the religious content, since it is often supplemented with Hausa, Yoruba, or English translations, depending on the audience. Moreover, Arabic has been crucial in building cross-border religious relationships among Nigerian Muslims and the larger Islamic world. Many Nigerian Muslim broadcasters use Arabic to interact with a global audience, enabling them to connect with Islamic academics and religious leaders from other regions of the Muslim world, such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Malaysia. Arabic acts as a shared linguistic bridge in these exchanges, helping to develop a sense of Islamic solidarity and unity.

In addition to religious programming, Arabic has found a home in educational broadcasts in Nigeria. Arabic language training is a significant part of the curriculum in Islamic schools (Madrasahs) in Nigeria, and broadcast media plays an important role in supporting this education. Some Nigerian radio and television stations run programs specifically geared to teach Arabic, particularly for young people interested in learning the language for religious purposes. These programs include language classes, Qur'anic Arabic tutorials, and lessons on Islamic history and civilization.

The Nigerian government has also encouraged Arabic education in the media by supporting the inclusion of Arabic content in public broadcasts. For example, Arabic programming on NTA and other public broadcasters regularly contains educational

parts that focus on Arabic grammar, syntax, and vocabulary. This not only helps to maintain the language but also increases literacy among the Nigerian Muslim people. Such educational activities have contributed to a growing interest in Arabic language acquisition, particularly among the youth, who increasingly consider Arabic as a critical ability for connecting with religious and intellectual discourses in the wider Islamic world (Mbah, 2017).

### Prospects of Arabic Language in Nigerian Broadcast Media

The prospects of the Arabic language in Nigerian broadcast media are shaped by several factors, including the growing demand for Arabic content, the presence of a significant Arabic-speaking population, and the role of Arabic as a global language. While Nigeria is a multilingual country with over 500 languages, Arabic holds particular relevance due to historical, cultural, and religious factors, especially among Nigeria's large Muslim population.

Here are some key prospects and factors influencing the future of Arabic in Nigerian broadcast media:

#### 1. Cultural and Religious Significance

- a. **Islamic Influence:** Arabic is the liturgical language of Islam, which is the religion of a significant portion of Nigeria's population (around 50% of the country's estimated 220 million people). The prominence of Islamic education, rituals, and media content (like religious sermons and Quranic teachings) boosts the demand for Arabic-language programming.

- b. **Growing Religious Broadcast Content:** Arabic-language channels or programs focusing on Islamic teachings, news, and events are likely to expand, especially in the northern regions of Nigeria, where the Muslim population is more concentrated.

#### 2. Educational Programming

- a. **Arabic as a Language of Learning:** Arabic is taught in many Nigerian schools, especially in the northern regions. Broadcast media can play a vital role in supporting educational programs aimed at teaching Arabic, enhancing language skills, and fostering a deeper understanding of Islamic culture.
- b. **Arabic Language Courses:** There is potential for television and radio stations to offer Arabic courses or language-learning programs, helping Nigerians who wish to learn or improve their proficiency in Arabic, not only for religious reasons but also for academic or business purposes.

#### 3. Media Expansion

- a. **Arabic TV and Radio Stations:** The rise of digital broadcasting and satellite television in Nigeria means there is greater potential for Arabic-language content to reach a wider audience. Stations like **Al Jazeera** already have a significant following, and there could be room for more regional or locally focused Arabic media outlets.

- b. **Collaborations with Pan-Arab Media Networks:** Partnerships between Nigerian broadcasters and international Arabic-language networks (such as Al Arabiya or MBC Group) could enhance the production and availability of Arabic content. This could include news, sports, cultural programs, or entertainment, catering to both local and international Arabic-speaking audiences.

#### 4. Business and Media Opportunities

- a. **Arabic-speaking Audiences:** Given the high population of Arabic speakers in sub-Saharan Africa and Nigeria's growing diaspora connections with the Arab world, there is a potential market for Arabic-language content. This is particularly relevant in areas such as entertainment, where Arabic-language films, music, and television programs have a global reach.
- b. **Economic Ties with the Arab World:** Nigeria's economic and diplomatic relations with Arabic-speaking countries, such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and the UAE, create opportunities for Arabic-language media to play a role in strengthening business ties, cultural exchange, and tourism. Media companies can tap into this by providing content that highlights bilateral relations, trade, and investment opportunities.

#### 5. Digital Media and Social Platforms

- a. **Digital Expansion:** With increasing internet penetration and the rise of mobile platforms,

Arabic content is more accessible than ever. Social media, streaming platforms, and podcasting could be key spaces for Arabic-language content production and distribution in Nigeria, enabling both local and international content creators to reach audiences effectively.

- b. **YouTube and Online News:** Arabic-language YouTube channels, podcasts, and online news platforms are already popular globally. This trend is expected to grow in Nigeria, with digital content creators tapping into the interest for Arabic-language media, news updates, and religious content.

#### 6. Challenges and Considerations

- a. **Limited Reach Beyond the North:** While Arabic has cultural and religious significance in northern Nigeria, its usage is less common in other regions of the country, where English, Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo are more widely spoken. Broadcasters will need to find ways to bridge the gap and make Arabic programming accessible to a broader audience.
- b. **Language Barrier:** Arabic's status as a non-native language for most Nigerians could limit the growth of Arabic-language programming unless it is complemented by local language content or translated subtitles for wider comprehension.
- c. **Competition from English:** English, as the official language of Nigeria, remains dominant in the media. This presents a

challenge to Arabic in terms of content production, consumption, and accessibility. However, the growth of niche audiences for Arabic religious content could help drive demand for more specialized Arabic-language programming.

## 7. Government and Policy Support

- a. **Media Regulation:** The Nigerian Broadcasting Commission (NBC) and other regulatory bodies might play a role in encouraging more Arabic content, especially if Arabic programming aligns with the promotion of national unity, education, and cultural diversity. However, ensuring a balance between Arabic and other local languages would be necessary to avoid alienating non-Arabic-speaking viewers.
- b. **Supporting Religious Media:** Given that Islamic religious media often promotes Arabic-language content, there may be government or private sector incentives for establishing Arabic-language religious broadcasting networks.

The prospects of Arabic language programming in Nigerian broadcast media are promising, particularly in the context of Nigeria's large Muslim population, its ties to the Arab world, and the growing digital media landscape. However, success will depend on overcoming challenges related to language barriers, regional differences, and competition from other media formats.

Ultimately, the expansion of Arabic in Nigerian broadcasting will depend on the media's ability to cater to diverse linguistic groups while balancing global and local content demands. The development of educational and cultural Arabic programming, as well as partnerships with international Arabic-language broadcasters, could help meet the rising demand and ensure the growth of Arabic-language content in the Nigerian media landscape.

### Medium that Promotes Usage of Arabic Language in Broadcast Media

- i. Recitation of holy Qur'an
- ii. Calling for daily prayers
- iii. Religious competitions
- iv. Religious adverts
- v. During Islamic holy month of Ramadan
- vi. Live broadcasting of religious events
- vii. During Hajj rites exercises through the satellite broadcast
- viii. Greetings during Islamic festivals

### Commonly Used Arabic Phrases in Broadcast Media in Southwest Nigeria

It is imminently acknowledged by researchers globally that Islam and Arabic language are two inseparable entities

In southwest Nigeria's broadcast media, especially in programs with Islamic or Arabic focus, several Arabic words and phrases are commonly used due to their cultural and religious significance. Here are some frequently used Arabic terms:

1. **السلام عليكم (As-Salamu Alaikum)** – "Peace be upon you," used as a greeting.

2. **رحمة الله وبركاته (Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatuh)** – Extending "As-Salamu Alaikum" with "and the mercy and blessings of God."
3. **الله أكبر (Allahu Akbar)** – "God is the Greatest," often used in calls to prayer and religious broadcasts.
4. **الحمد لله (Alhamdulillah)** – "Praise be to God," commonly used to express gratitude.
5. **إن شاء الله (Insha'Allah)** – "If God wills," often said in discussions about the future.
6. **ما شاء الله (Masha'Allah)** – "As God wills," often used to express admiration or appreciation.
7. **أعوذ بالله (A'udhu Billah)** – "I seek refuge in God," frequently heard in Islamic programs.
8. **القرآن (Al-Qur'an)** – Refers to the "Quran," common in discussions of religious texts and teachings.
9. **حديث (Hadith)** – Refers to "Prophetic sayings," often cited in religious discussions.
10. **دعاء (Dua)** – Meaning "supplication," used when discussing prayer or blessings.
11. **مسلم (Muslim) and إسلام (Islam)** – "Muslim" and "Islam," used in faith and community-oriented programs.
12. **إمام (Imam)** – "Prayer leader," referenced in discussions on mosques and religious leadership.
13. **أمة (Ummah)** – "Muslim community," used when discussing communal issues.
14. **زكاة (Zakat)** – Refers to "almsgiving," commonly mentioned in charity and social welfare contexts.
15. **شريعة (Shari'ah)** – "Islamic law," used in discussions on jurisprudence and ethics.
16. **دعوة (Da'wah)** – "Invitation" or "proselytization," often mentioned in outreach and religious propagation programs.
17. **رمضان (Ramadan) and عيد (Eid)** – Common terms used during the months of fasting and celebration, marking significant Islamic observances.
18. **أستغفر الله (Astaghfirullah)** – "I seek forgiveness from God," used in contexts of repentance.
19. **بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم (Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Rahim)** – "In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful," often used to begin programs or readings.
20. **إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون**
21. **رمضان كريم**

These phrases not only facilitate connection within the Muslim audience but also add cultural and linguistic depth to broadcasts, enhancing religious, cultural, and community-oriented content.

### Recommendations

From the findings of the study, the researchers recommend that the language policies in Nigeria should explicitly incorporate Arabic beyond its religious associations to promote linguistic diversity and cultural exchange, while Media outlets should be encouraged to showcase Nigeria's rich linguistic and cultural heritage, utilizing Arabic as a means of fostering inclusivity while ensuring equal representation of other languages. Integrating Arabic

into national educational curricula at various levels can enhance proficiency and expand its usage beyond religious contexts. Additionally, media planners should adopt inclusive strategies to ensure Arabic-language programming does not marginalize other linguistic or ethnic groups. Expansion of Arabic broadcasting to sectors such as tourism, commerce, and international relations, especially with Arabic-speaking countries to strengthen Nigeria's global connectivity and economic opportunities, is also recommended.

### Conclusion

In terms of national identity, the employment of Arabic in the media can be perceived as both a unifying and dividing factor. On one hand, Arabic's function in establishing Islamic solidarity and intellectual interaction with the broader Arab world helps build a sense of belonging among Nigerian Muslims, portraying them as part of a worldwide Muslim ummah (community). This transnational identity is particularly essential given the growing importance of global Islamic media, such as Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya, which Nigerian Muslims engage with to stay informed about religious and political developments. On the other side, the association of Arabic with religious rituals tied to Islam could enhance ethnic and religious identities that hinder the broader sense of national cohesion, especially in a multicultural society with over 500 languages and numerous religions.

The growing usage of Arabic in Nigerian broadcasting calls for an attentive approach to language policy and media control from a policy

perspective. It is imperative that media planners take into account the consequences of Arabic-language programming for social cohesion and national unity, given Nigeria's historical history of linguistic and ethnic strife. While Arabic-language media content has the potential to empower Nigerian Muslims, its presence in public media should be carefully regulated to ensure that it does not exclude other languages and groups. Policies that support linguistic inclusivity are also required, as they guarantee the rights of all ethnic and religious groups and encourage media outlets to portray the nation's diversity in ways that foster social cohesion and understanding between people.

In light of these concerns, the less usage of Arabic in Nigeria's broadcast media underlines the little attention given to it as against a broader global trend of media globalization and the transnational flow of cultural and linguistic influences. However, it also emphasizes the need for a more nuanced approach to language use in multicultural language-religious cultures.

It can be argued that knowledge of Arabic language usage contributes to the preservation and dissemination of Islamic culture. Its growing role in public broadcasting in Nigeria necessitates a critical evaluation of its potential to either strengthen or challenge national unity and the country's efforts at fostering social harmony in a pluralistic society. Arabic language usage in Nigerian broadcast programming has become a problem of neglected language usage that is profoundly connected to Nigeria's social, cultural, and political dynamics.

For media researchers and politicians, it is vital to treat this issue with awareness to the complexity of language and identity in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society. Arabic, while a significant tool for religious expression and cultural interchange, must be integrated wisely into Nigeria's media environment to ensure that it contributes to the greater purpose of nation-building, rather than deepening tensions.

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