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INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE USE AND CONSUMER PATRONAGE OF LOCAL PRODUCTS IN SELECTED COMMUNITIES OF DELTA STATE NIGERIA

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Abstract

Language choice is an important consideration in promoting locally produced goods in multilingual rural markets. This study examined perceptions of indigenous language communication in relation to consumer awareness, acceptance and patronage, product credibility, and purchasing behaviour in Iyede, Abraka, and Iselle-Azagba, Delta State, Nigeria. A descriptive survey employed convenience selection of communities and markets, followed by purposive recruitment of eligible respondents. Of 396 questionnaires distributed, 388 were returned and 381 were retained for analysis. The questionnaire used five response categories; a separate test–retest exercise involving 10 participants yielded a reported Spearman correlation of 0.82. Community summaries in the source report place mean scores between 3.28 and 3.39 across the four dimensions. The report also presents positive regression coefficients of 0.238–0.308, with reported p values below .001. However, inconsistencies between item frequencies and stated community sample sizes, uncertainty about response coding, and incomplete model documentation prevent independent confirmation of these results. The findings therefore provide provisional evidence about perceived communication benefits rather than demonstrated increases in sales or causal effects. Indigenous language promotion warrants further investigation through reconciled survey data and designs that measure actual purchasing behaviour. Producers may consider locally understandable communication alongside accurate product information and quality assurance.

Keywords: indigenous language; local products; consumer patronage; rural marketing; Delta State; Nigeria

Introduction

Promoting local products requires communication that consumers can understand and regard as relevant to their everyday needs. In rural markets, the language used to describe a product can influence whether its features, price, origin, and intended use are clear. Indigenous languages also carry cultural meanings that may shape how consumers interpret messages and relate to sellers. These considerations are relevant to locally produced agricultural goods, food products, crafts, fabrics, and other products traded within communities in Delta State, Nigeria.

The source study identifies Isoko, Urhobo, and Enuani as relevant languages in the selected communities. It describes everyday trading interactions, local broadcasting, and community communication as possible settings for product promotion. These channels provide opportunities to communicate in familiar terms and to answer questions directly. Nevertheless, language familiarity should be distinguished from product quality: an understandable message does not itself establish that a product is safe, effective, affordable, or suitable for purchase.

Related literature supports examining language within its social context. Abdulai et al. (2023) studied indigenous communication systems in Ghana, identifying their role in culturally situated information dissemination. Their focus on rural development is relevant to communication accessibility, although it does not establish effects on consumer purchases in Delta State. Adeyeye et al. (2021) examined indigenous language agricultural radio programming and agricultural productivity in North-Central Nigeria. This provides a related communication setting rather than a direct test of the present study's marketing propositions. Adeyeye and Salawu (2025) examined indigenous languages in MTN Nigeria advertising, extending the discussion to commercial messaging. The differences between these settings and community product markets require careful interpretation.

The present article addresses the specific question of how respondents in three selected communities perceive indigenous language promotion in relation to local products. It draws on the supplied study and consolidates its four research dimensions into a journal-style manuscript. Its contribution is a context-specific account of reported perceptions, accompanied by explicit recognition of the source report's statistical and methodological limitations. It does not treat the survey as a controlled test of language effects.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

Indigenous language use refers here to communicating promotional information through languages associated with the communities concerned. Local products refer to goods produced within the relevant local economy. Consumer awareness concerns recognition and understanding of product information; acceptance and patronage concern willingness to support or purchase products; credibility concerns perceived trustworthiness; and purchasing behaviour concerns reported preferences, repeat purchases, and recommendations. The source instrument addresses these concepts through agreement statements rather than observed transactions.

These dimensions are related but should not be treated as interchangeable. A consumer may understand a promotional message while doubting the product's

quality, or may trust a producer but be unable to afford the product. Similarly, an intention to recommend a product differs from a recorded recommendation or purchase. The questionnaire's wording means that the results are best interpreted as respondents' beliefs about promotional communication, not direct measures of market performance.

The source study draws on social identity theory and uses and gratifications theory. Social identity theory provides a basis for considering whether familiar language signals shared group membership and cultural recognition (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). This suggests a possible explanation for perceived authenticity and affinity, but neither identification nor mediation was directly established in the reported analysis. The uses and gratifications perspective, as applied in the source, proposes that audiences attend to communication that meets information needs. In this setting, understandable promotional messages may be more useful to consumers seeking product information. These perspectives guide interpretation; they are not tested mechanisms in the available evidence.

The study examined four propositions: indigenous language communication is associated with awareness of local products; indigenous language promotion is associated with acceptance and patronage; familiar language is associated with perceived product credibility; and sustained indigenous language promotion is associated with reported purchasing preferences. The cross-sectional survey design permits examination of perceptions at one point in time, while leaving temporal order and causal relationships unresolved.

Methods

Design and study setting

The study used a descriptive survey in Iyede, Abraka, and Iselle-Azagba, Delta State, Nigeria. The source describes these settings as communities with active local markets in which indigenous languages are used in daily communication. Its reported population estimate was 43,689, comprising community estimates of 10,674 for Iyede, 20,805 for Abraka, and 12,210 for Iselle-Azagba. These estimates were attributed to the 2006 census with a 3% growth adjustment. The projection endpoint and calculation were not supplied; the population figure is therefore retained as a reported planning estimate rather than independently validated.

Sample and recruitment

A target sample of 396 was calculated using $n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$, with N = 43,689 and e = .05. Communities and markets were selected by convenience. Respondents were purposively selected on the basis of residence and their ability to speak and use indigenous language in the selected communities. The source assigned 150 questionnaires to Abraka, 135 to Iselle-Azagba, and 111 to Iyede. These allocations are reported as implemented; they are not proportional to the population estimates stated above. Because recruitment was nonprobability based, the sample-size formula does not establish a design-based 5% margin of error or representative coverage of the wider state population.

Instrument and data collection

The structured questionnaire was titled Indigenous Language Use in Promoting Local Products in Rural Communities. It collected demographic information and responses concerning awareness,

acceptance and patronage, credibility, and purchasing behaviour. Responses ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Face and content validity were assessed by the research supervisor and experts in mass communication and research methodology. The source reports that revisions were made for clarity and relevance.

A test–retest exercise was conducted with 10 individuals who had comparable characteristics but were outside the main sample. The instrument was administered twice, one week apart, yielding a reported Spearman rank correlation of 0.82. This assesses temporal stability, not internal consistency. Construct-specific reliability estimates and the pilot responses were not supplied. The researcher and 20 trained assistants familiar with the local languages administered and interpreted questionnaires over three weeks. The source labels the results as a 2026 field survey but does not give exact collection dates or a standardized translation protocol.

Analysis and reporting boundaries

The source describes frequency counts, percentages, means, standard deviations, and multiple regression analysis using SPSS at a .05 significance threshold. This article retains the reported community summaries and coefficient table while separating them from independently recalculated questionnaire disposition rates. Respondent-level data, full regression output, model specification, and unambiguous numerical coding of the response categories were not available. No new regression was performed. Reported p values of .000 are expressed as $p < .001$; this corrects reporting notation without independently validating significance.

Several source item-frequency rows do not sum to their stated community sample sizes. For example, the first awareness row for Iyede sums to 118 rather than 107; corresponding purchasing-behaviour tables contain totals of 142 for Abraka and 121 for Iselle-Azagba rather than 144 and 130. Some displayed means also appear consistent with reverse scoring of the labelled response columns. Consequently, an above-midpoint mean cannot safely be interpreted as agreement until the coding is confirmed. Tables labelled Estimated Community Analysis also require clarification about whether the figures represent observed or estimated responses.

Ethical approval, consent procedures, anonymity safeguards, and data-management arrangements are not documented in the supplied report. Their absence from the report does not establish that they were absent from the research, but author confirmation is required before submission.

Results

Questionnaire disposition and sample composition

Of the 396 questionnaires distributed, 388 were returned, giving a return rate of 98.0%. Seven returned questionnaires were excluded, leaving 381 usable questionnaires, equivalent to 96.2% of those distributed. Eight questionnaires were not returned. The combined proportion not included in analysis was 3.8%; this comprises nonreturns and exclusions and should not be described solely as a nonresponse rate. Exclusions accounted for 1.8% of returned questionnaires. These percentages were recalculated from the stated counts.

Table 1 Questionnaire distribution and usable responses

Community	Distributed	Usable	Share of usable sample
Iyede	111	107	28.1%
Abraka	150	144	37.8%
Iselle-Azagba	135	130	34.1%
Total	396	381	100.0%

Source: counts in the supplied study; percentages calculated from 381 usable responses.

Combining the demographic counts across the three communities gives 204 men and 177 women, representing 53.5% and 46.5% of the usable sample. Respondents aged 18–27 years numbered 119 (31.2%), those aged 28–37 numbered 149 (39.1%), and those aged 38 years or older numbered 113 (29.7%). Educational categories comprised 91 respondents with primary education (23.9%), 171 with secondary education (44.9%), and 119 with tertiary education (31.2%). Occupations included farming, 124 (32.5%); trading, 146 (38.3%); and artisan or craft work, 111 (29.1%). These totals were calculated from the source's community demographic counts rather than its inconsistent narrative percentages.

Reported community summaries

Table 2 Community mean scores reported in the source study

Community	Awareness	Acceptance and patronage	Credibility	Purchasing behaviour
Iyede	3.37	3.30	3.39	3.28
Abraka	3.32	3.38	3.32	3.36
Iselle-Azagba	3.33	3.36	3.29	3.36

Source: community-level summary in the supplied study. Values are reproduced as reported and remain subject to reconciliation of frequencies, coding, and denominators.

The reported summaries occupy a narrow range of 3.28–3.39. Iyede has the highest reported awareness and credibility scores, while Abraka has the highest acceptance and patronage score. Abraka and Iselle-Azagba share the highest purchasing-behaviour score. These are descriptive comparisons only. The available report supplies neither uncertainty intervals for the community means nor formal tests of between-community differences. Moreover, unresolved coding and denominator problems prevent a reliable inference about the direction or strength of agreement.

Reported hypothesis tests

Table 3 Regression coefficients and test statistics reported in the source

Dimension	Reported coefficient	t statistic	Reported p
Awareness	0.308	5.596	< .001
Acceptance and patronage	0.271	5.020	< .001
Product credibility	0.238	4.553	< .001
Purchasing behaviour	0.287	5.255	< .001

The source table labels the coefficients B, while its narrative describes them as standardized β. Coefficient type and model specification require author verification.

The source rejects all four null hypotheses and reports R^2 = .659 in its abstract. However, the supplied hypothesis table lacks a model summary, intercept, standard errors, confidence intervals, degrees of freedom, and diagnostic results. It does not establish whether the four coefficients arise from one model or separate models, and the dependent variable is not consistently identified. Consequently, the R^2 value cannot be assigned confidently to individual outcomes, and the coefficients cannot be interpreted as verified effects of language exposure on those outcomes. Table 3 records the reported statistical results without resolving those uncertainties.

Discussion

The source study interprets indigenous language promotion as beneficial for awareness, acceptance, credibility, and purchasing behaviour. That interpretation is relevant to the practical communication problems described in the communities, but the evidence as supplied is provisional. Clearer language could plausibly help consumers recognize products and ask informed questions. The present survey, however, does not independently establish improved recall, comprehension, sales, or repeat purchasing, because those outcomes were not directly observed and the response coding requires clarification.

Awareness and comprehension remain useful distinctions for rural marketing research. Knowing that a product exists differs from understanding its price, instructions, or characteristics. Future analysis should separate these elements and establish how frequently respondents encounter particular promotional channels. Without exposure measures, it is difficult to determine whether reported attitudes reflect indigenous language advertising, ordinary seller–buyer conversation, or a broader preference for familiar communication.

Credibility also requires careful interpretation. Social identity theory offers a possible account of why a familiar language might signal shared cultural membership and encourage identification (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Yet shared language cannot substitute for verifiable product claims. Researchers should

distinguish trust in a communicator from confidence in a product and from evidence of product quality. This distinction is particularly important when local products include food, skincare preparations, or herbal goods, for which promotional familiarity alone provides no assurance of safety or effectiveness.

The purchasing dimension concerns self-reported beliefs about repeated promotion, preference, loyalty, and recommendation. Its interpretation as actual behaviour would exceed the evidence. Price, availability, product quality, household resources, and existing relationships with traders may affect purchases independently of language. The incomplete regression documentation leaves it unclear whether these factors were measured or controlled. An experimental comparison of otherwise equivalent messages, or a longitudinal study linking communication exposure to transactions, would provide stronger evidence about behavioural effects.

The related studies cited in this article concern indigenous communication systems, agricultural broadcasting, and commercial advertising. They provide a rationale for considering communication in its cultural setting, while leaving the specific effects of language on local-product patronage unresolved. The present study's value is therefore primarily contextual: it identifies four dimensions that merit further investigation among producers and consumers in the selected communities, rather than establishing a general effect applicable to all rural markets.

Practical implications

Local producers can consider using the languages understood by their intended audiences when explaining prices, product features, origins, and instructions. Messages should be checked by competent speakers, particularly where dialect differences or technical terms may lead to ambiguity. Where markets include several language groups, multilingual communication may be more appropriate than reliance on a single language. The language mix should reflect the audience rather than an assumption that every resident shares the same linguistic preference.

Community stakeholders and business associations could support the development and testing of accurate promotional wording. Pilot activities should assess comprehension and compare purchasing outcomes before expansion. Producers should combine understandable communication with truthful claims, consistent product quality, and accessible customer feedback. These are practical proposals arising from the research problem; the available results do not quantify their expected commercial benefit.

Limitations and further research

Convenience selection of communities and markets and purposive respondent recruitment limit generalization. The cross-sectional design does not establish causality or sustained change. Self-reported agreement is vulnerable to recall, interviewer, and social-desirability influences. On-the-spot interpretation may introduce variation where standardized translations are unavailable. The small test–retest exercise does not establish construct validity or internal consistency, and the available report does not describe adjustment for clustering within communities or markets.

The most immediate limitation is the internal inconsistency of the supplied statistical tables. The original dataset and SPSS output should be audited to

reconcile community denominators, response labels, composite scores, and regression direction. Only then should inferential conclusions be retained or revised. Further research should distinguish producers from consumers, specify product categories and languages used, document exposure frequency, and incorporate independently measured comprehension or purchasing outcomes.

Conclusion

The supplied study examines indigenous language promotion and consumer patronage through a survey with 381 usable responses from Iyede, Abraka, and Iselle-Azagba. Its reported summaries and coefficients suggest that language is a relevant dimension of perceived local-product promotion, but unresolved data and reporting inconsistencies prevent firm conclusions about the direction, magnitude, or statistical reliability of those relationships. Culturally and linguistically accessible communication remains a reasonable strategy to investigate alongside product quality and accurate information. Reconciliation of the original data and complete methodological reporting are necessary before this manuscript can support journal submission.

Declarations

Ethics and consent: To be completed by the author from the actual approval and consent records. Funding and competing interests: Not specified in the source; author confirmation required. Data availability: Respondent-level data and full statistical output were not supplied for preparation of this manuscript; an accurate availability statement must be provided by the author. Author details: Affiliation is taken from the supplied document; corresponding-author contact information and any additional authorship contributions require confirmation.

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