

“CALL FOR CHAPTERS” African language media development and sustainability*

Salawu (2006a) notes that the story of indigenous language newspapers rising and dying is the same across most parts of Africa. In 1930, there were 19 registered African language newspapers in South Africa. They included the isiXhosa *Imvo Zabantsundu* and *Inkundla ya Bantu*. Today, most of those newspapers are non-existent. As recently as 1990s, there used to be newspapers in fifteen Ghanaian languages; today, there is none (Salawu 2006b). In the colonial Democratic Republic of Congo, there were more than 150 periodicals in indigenous languages. Today, the story is quite different (Vinck 2006). In Cameroon, there is hardly a remarkable indigenous language newspaper (Tanjong and Muluh 2006). Of all the newspapers in the first to the fourth ‘waves’ of indigenous language press in Nigeria (Folarin and Mohammed 1996), only *Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo* (established in 1937) still exists till today. *Iroyin Yoruba*, established in 1945, existed till 1996 when it was finally laid to rest. Meanwhile, many other newspapers that had come after *Gaskiya* and *Iroyin Yoruba* had ceased to exist.

There are however some relative success (relative when compared to the success of the colonial language press) stories in African language newspaper publishing but in most of these cases, the newspapers go tabloid publishing sensational stories and using the adulterated form of the particular African language to appeal to a mass readership (Mpofu and Salawu, 2018; Salawu, 2015; Ndlovu, 2011).

Not without its own challenges though, in comparative terms, the situation is still much better with the broadcast media. This therefore indicates that African culture is still largely oral.

The proposed volume which is planned to be published by Routledge in its *Routledge Contemporary Africa* series will focus on why businesses in African language press are unstable and what can be done to develop African language journalism into quality journalism while also ensuring their profitability.

The following are some of the issues the volume will like to touch:

- Factors that are responsible for the underdevelopment of African language journalism and unsustainability of African language newspapers.
- How African language journalism can be developed into quality journalism
- How African language newspaper business can be sustained
- Impact of digitisation on the sustainability of African language newspaper business
- Political Economy of African Language Media
- African Language Media Economics
- Management and Organisation of African Language Media
- Advertisements/Commercials in African Language Media
- Business Models for African Language Media in the era of Digitisation
- Globalisation and African Language Media Economics
- Language Politics, Development and Sustainability of African Language Media
- Comparative analyses of economies of African language broadcast, digital and print media

This list is by no means exhaustive.

Interested contributors are invited to submit a 500-word proposal and a short biography

to Abiodun Salawu (North-West University, South Africa) at salawuabiodun@gmail.com October 15, 2018. Final chapters of approximately 5000-7000 words will be due by 28 February, 2019. Please note that all submissions will be peer-reviewed.

References

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THANK YOU